GUILTY MEN OF INDIA'S PARTITION

By

RAMMANOHAR LOHIA

1960
KITABISTAN
ALLAHABAD

First Published : December 1960



PUBLISHED BY KITABISTAN, ALLAHABAD (INDIA)
PRINTED BY THE SAMMELAN MUDRANALAYA, PRAYAG

GUILTY MEN OF INDIA'S PARTITION

INTRODUCTION

WHAT began in my mind as a review of Maulana Azad's "India Wins Freedom" became an independent account of the country's partition, as soon as I started setting it on paper. The account may not be as ordered or chronological, at least outwardly, as some may have wished it to be, but it is perhaps therefore a little warmer and truer. While reading the proofs, I became aware of having sought two objectives, one, to slay errors and untruths and to highlight certain happenings and aspects of the truth and, two, to outline the basic causes that led to the partition. Among these causes, I enumerated, first, British chicanery, secondly, declining years of congress leadership, thirdly, objective condition of Hindu-Muslim rioting, fourthly, lack of grit and stamina among the people, fifthly Gandhiji's non-violence, sixthly, Muslim League's separatism, seventhly, inability to seize opportunities as they came, and, eighthly, Hindu hauteur.

Not much importance need be attached to Mr. Rajagopalachariar's or the communist support to partition and the opposition to it by fanatical Hinduism or right nationalism. These were no primary events. They were stances or secondary expressions of deeper forces. Thus, for instance, the opposition of fanatical Hinduism to partition did not and could not make any sense, for one of the forces that partitioned the country was precisely this Hindu fanaticism. It was like the murderer recoiling from his crime, after it had been done.

Let there be no mistake about it. Those who have shouted loudest of Akhand Bharat, the present Jan Sangh and its predecessors of the curiously un-Hindu spirit of Hinduism, have helped Britain and the Muslim League partition the country, if the consequences of their acts and not their motivations are taken into account. They did nothing whatever to bring the Muslim close to the Hindu within a single nation. They did

almost everything to estrange them from each other. Such estrangement is the root cause of partition. To espouse the philosophy of estrangement and, at the same time, the concept of undivided India is an act of grievous self-deception, only if we assume that those who do so are honest men. Their action acquires meaning and purpose alone in the context of a war, when they are strong enough to suppress the men whom they estrange. Such a war is impossible, at least during our century. Even if it ever became possible, the cause certainly would not lie in wishing or shouting for it. Without a war, therefore, the coupling of the two concepts of undivided India and Hindu-Muslim estrangement can only reinforce the idea of partition and give succour to Pakistan. The opponent of Muslims in India is the friend of Pakistan. The Jan Sanghies and all Akhand-Bharatis of the Hindu pattern are friends to Pakistan. I am a true Akhand-Bharati. I do not like the partition. There must be millions of such persons on both sides of the border. But they must cease to be exclusively Hindu or exclusively Muslim, before they can become true to their yearning of undivided Hindustan.

Right nationalism split into two; one branch of it extended support to the idea of partition, while the other opposed it. When these events took place, their capacity to please or anger was not small. But they were barren events, devoid of any significance. Right nationalism could only oppose verbally or silently; it had no strength to oppose actively. Its opposition, therefore, merged smoothly into the surrender and betrayal by the main body of nationalism. In similar manner, the right nationalist opinion that supported partition played a minor diversionary role, in spite of the fact that its speech-making was greatly annoying to genuine nationalists. This speech-making had no capacity to influence, for weakness lay not in it but in the broken, halting, maimed and surrendering spirit of the Indian people and their nationalism. Right nationalism, both that supported partition and that opposed it, were barren offshoots of its parent, the main body of effete nationalism. I sometimes wonder if traitors play any primary role at all in the making of history. They are despicable people, of that there is

no doubt. But are they also important people, I doubt. The traitor's action would be devoid of all meaning and would occasion a court-martial or a shrug of the shoulder, if it were not supported by the latent treachery of the main bulk of the army.

Communist treachery, similarly, plays no primary role. It does not cause a development; the causing is done from elsewhere. Communist support to partition did not produce Pakistan. At its worst, it acted like an incubator. Nobody remembers it now except as a stale propagandist argument against communism. I am somewhat intrigued by this aspect of communist treachery, that it leaves no lasting bad taste in the mouth of the people. Other traitors are not so fortunate. It would be worthwhile to try to argue the communist case from inside; what must have been in the mind of the communist, when he supported partition.

Indian communists supported partition presumably in the hope that they would thereby gain hold on the new-born State of Pakistan, obtain influence among Indian Muslims and run no big risk of alienating the unformed or effete Hindu mind. Their calculations have been proved to be wrong except in the small measure that they have acquired some pockets of influence among India's Muslims and have roused no strong indignation among the Hindus. They have therefore done no mischief to themselves, but have brought no benefit to the country.

Communist strategy is in its very nature such that it can bring strength to a people only if it succeeds, and must necessarily help weaken them, if it does not capture power. Self-determination to nationalities loses all meaning in Soviet Russia; it has abundant propagandist value in Czarist Russia. Communism is partitionist, only when it is not in power, in order to weaken its foe in the shape of a strong nationalism. When it can itself represent nationalism, it ceases to be partitionist. Communism is unificatory in Korea and Vietnam; it is partitionist in Germany. Most men reason by example. They do not reason by premises. There are the examples of Soviet Russia and Vietnam, when there is need to illustrate the strength-giving unificatory role of Communism, and the examples of

India and Germany in order to illustrate its spirit of freedom. The crux of the matter lies elsewhere. To Communism, no idea matters, no single principle except the total concept of worker's rule. Such a concept must necessarily weaken a nation except in certain select situations. It has been continually weakening the Indian nation. But its adherents are blind to this fact because of their hopes in a favourable future. The Indian people become blind as well, because Communist treachery does not but nationalist or democratic effiminacy plays the primary role.

I do not think that there are any primary causes of partition outside of those I have enumerated. Even these derive their essence from two great elements of the Indian situation in relation to the Hindu-Muslim problem. In the past eight hundred years of their relationship, the Hindu and Muslim have continually suffered from a see-saw of estrangement and approximation, with a slight edge on estrangement, so that their emotional incorporation into a single nation has so far been defeated. At the same time, the temper of the Indian people has learnt the arts of adjustment and patient acceptance and surrender in such measure that nowhere else on earth has slavery been so mistaken for world brotherhood or treachery for statesmanship or subordination for accommodation. These two elements have governed the Hindu-Muslim problem. Without them, British chicanery or creeping old age of Congress leaders would have been inconsequential details of history and could not have borne the bitter fruit they did.

The estrangement of the Muslim from the Hindu has continued into the years of freedom. I suspect that it is deeper today than it was before the partition. Estrangement produced partition, which therefore could not possibly dissolve it in an automatic way. Into the effect enters the cause. Nothing has been done in the years of freedom to bring the Muslim close to the Hindu, to remove the seeds of estrangement from their souls. Among the unforgivable crimes of the Congress government is precisely its failure to bring together the estranged souls, in fact, its unwillingness attempt the task.

Back of this crime are the desire for vote-catching and the philosophy of cosmopolitanism. Almost all political elements in the land, particularly such as pride themselves on their secularity, suffer from these. Vote-catching can last as a deadly enterprise for a long time. Nobody who wishes to succeed can escape the competition in decline. After a time sanity may be restored but neither the time nor the agency is yet come. To obtain votes, appeals to Hindu and Muslim are still overwhelmingly separate. Secular parties have not yet dared to appeal to Hindu and Muslim in such fashion as to cure them of their evil thoughts or habits. To this desire for selfish gain, the philosophy of cosmopolitanism has provided the altruistic justification. The need to tackle and try to solve each problem separately has not been felt by the cosmopolites. They have assumed that industrialisation and a modernised economy would dissolve the Hindu-Muslim estrangement, foolishly imagining a relationship where none exists. This silly belief in the magic properties of industrialisation coupled with the desire for vote catching led twelve years after partition and freedom to such a ghastly situation in Kerala that supposedly nationalist and democratic parties combined with the Muslim League, thereby causing directly recrudescence of outspoken Muslim leaguism and separatism all over the country. Twelve years after the country was partitioned, congressism and praja socialism found it necessary once again to undertake and complete another foul act of separatism.

While political, economic and social factors under groups and communities, the real force for such sundering comes from elsewhere, from symbols and abstractions. Undoubtedly, such social solutions must be sought as interdining or intermarriage, also economic solutions such as full employment or nationalisation or equality, also political solutions such as guaranteed representation of backward castes and groups. Without these solutions, the problem of estrangement can never be laid to rest, but with them alone, it will ever be there in some form, quiescent or virulent. Factors of religion and history must be considered seriously. It is these that sour the minds and hearts of men.

Complete equality among gods and prophets of religion

can never be achieved except perhaps through atheism and destruction of religious worship. What may be achieved is near-equality. With a very thorough schooling in comparative religious matters and a general uplifting of the mind, it may be possible to put Ram and Mohammed on almost equally high pedestals, but never wholly so, for the person professing one religion and not another or born into it will most certainly have a special regard for it, however private. The irrational aim of trying to keep religions and to awaken completely equal regard for them should not therefore be sought. What should be sought is respect and understanding for another's faith. A historical and comparative study of religions is the best way to awaken these. A sugary sentimentalism in these matters is as valueless as fanaticism is destructive and divisive. A restrained and calm appraisal of religious doctrines and faith with their achievements on the one hand and their drawbacks on the other would be of value.

The force that separates most is a particular view of history. Groups and communities are formed principally through the view they hold of what has happened. Hindus and Muslims of India hold separate views of their common history. Such Hindus are rare as would acknowledge a Muslim ruler or man of note as their ancestor. Correspondingly, a Muslim who recognises his ancestor in a Hindu of note is rare. A certain number of glib fools has not been wanting, who have in their quest for national unity lumped together all Muslim rulers and invaders on the register of Hindu ancestry. Such a smooth operation is of no use. It bespeaks adolescence at its best and a foul-smelling indolence at its worst. There would be no Hindu-Muslim problem today or when partition was effected, if Hindus and Muslims had been able to interpret their history unitedly and learnt to live in peace. British rule did not create something which had not existed before; that was wholly without its power. It may have at times awakened what was slumbering or made use frequently of what was evil. The Hindu and Muslim views of their common history have differed in the past as they do today and that is a main cause of their separation in identity and action.

Muslims of India think that they owe their origin to such marauders as Ghazni and Ghori. An element of false self-pride enters into such erroneous understanding, which is further sustained by a theory of history that sees in every conquest an act of progress. Undoubtedly, there must have been stagnation and utter decadence in a society, which fell to an invader. Equally undoubtedly, every new force also one that conquers, brings some good alongside of the evil that it injects. To assess a conquest on the basis, first, of its success against a weaker foe and, secondly, of its introduction of novelty and movement would be to obliterate the distinction between good and evil, to worship the powerful and to select facts one-sidedly. No conquest is ever good, except in the wholly imaginary instance of a people that would have stayed stagnant until doomsday without it. A nation that reads history in any other way becomes chronically subject to invasions and conquests and India easily holds the world record in this respect.

Muslims, because they have acknowledged Ghazni and Ghori as their ancestors, have been unable to protect their own freedom and rule. India's mediaeval history is just as much a war between Muslim and Muslim as between Hindu and Muslim. The invading Muslim has fought and conquered the native Muslims. Five times were the native Muslims unable to protect their freedom. They were subjected to such unparalleled massacres as those of Taimur and Nadirshah. The Mogul Taimur massacred the native Pathans and the Irani Nadirshah the native Moguls. A people who acknowledge invaders and massacres as their ancestors are unworthy of freedom and their self-pride is false, because they have no continuing identity that they can maintain. This, however, does not solve the problem of the enduring effects of a conquest, if it has lasted long. Conquerors who change into natives in course of time become a part of the nation and a formula must be evolved that corresponds to this change in realities. It is one thing not to acknowledge the rape of one's mother; it is quite another to refuse to accept its results. The Muslim has erred in acknowledging both the rape and its results, the Hindu in refusing to acknowledge either. The

Hindu has been unable to protect his mother and he adopts the easy way of transferring his anger at his own infirmity on to the head of his half-brother. The half-brother in turn goes native and falls victim to another variation of the disease. His scale of values falls so low that he mistakes infirmity for prowess.

There is a way of reading history, which corresponds to the truth and would make of such as Razia, Shershah, Jaysi and Rahiman together with such as Vikramaditya, Asoka, Hemu and Pratap the common ancestors of Hindus and Muslims. In like manner, Hindus and Muslims would commonly recognise in such as Ghazni, Ghori and Babar marauders and invading barbarians and in persons like Prithviraj, Sanga and Bhau expressions of India's folly and infirmity. I have deliberately selected persons, who were personally brave but collectively stupid in order to bring out the country's long story of defeat and surrender. Cowards in a personal way are not as dangerous to a people's freedom as brave warriors without comprehension of social realities and courage. Among these brave but foolish warriors, I would list persons such as Shah Alam and among the marauders and barbarians those like Umichand. Sanga and Pratap may not have been of very different material, but an objective reading of history would see Sanga as the leader of a small and narrow-minded coterie into whose weak hands the guarding of freedom was entrusted and Pratap the man who tried to revive the flame of freedom out of dying embers. Of Mansingh and Akbar, I hope some day to write in detail, these men of the twilight region, where freedom and slavery meet, where a conquest is trying to turn native, where abounds superb intelligence and statecraft, but something precisely of that full and free flight of the spirit is lacking as transforms cleverness into greatness.

I have felt lately that the Moguls with the exception of the almost great Akbar and the clever Jahangir were a relapse into estrangement, while the Pathans had reached an unusual degree of approximation with the Hindu. Jaysi and Rahiman are as bright stars of Hindi poetry as any Hindus. In fact, Rahiman is a name that embodies the Indianisation of Islam. It is like the name of Russian Muslims, whose Islamic names

have been traditionally Russianised by the addition of such suffixes as 'ov' or 'in' or that of Indonesian Muslims, most of whose Indonesian or Hindu names have not been changed in spite of the conversion to Islam. I cannot say yet how far Jodhabai was able to see in her personal situation the piquancy of a national approximation. I have recently heard of the poetess Taju dyer by trade and Muslim by birth, around the time of 1857, whose Krishna poetry matches Mira's devotion. There seems almost to be a law that approximation is more often the work of persons of low caste or learning, and estrangement that of the ruling or more learned castes, while it may well be that, in critical times, approximation tends to degenerate into extinction and estrangement to stiffen into maintenance of identity.

When often I have suggested removal of Hindu tuft and Muslim beard and other external marks and rationalisation of forms of dress, name and living, I have fully known that they are only steps towards approximation and endearment. Even as first acts, they are almost impossible to undertake, unless a corresponding change in mental attitudes takes place alongside. The external appearance of a person is in large measure the twin of his internal attitudes. Conviction, habit and a substratum of self-respect, of the degenerating into arrogant assertion of irrational identity, produce both appearance and attitude. If history were read more truthfully and intelligently and religious prophets were better understood, a miracle-making movement would arise such as would make Hindu and Muslim indistinguishable in their appearance. Their minds would at the same time approximate.

What matters is the attitude of the mind that makes peace and acts in unison, after appropriate understanding of history and religion, or one that distorts and quarrels. With a peaceable and approximating attitude such questions as music in front of mosque and cow-slaughter dissolve or are settled amicably. Without it, no political agreements endure beyond the minutes taken to sign them. Hardly is the canal waters agreement signed, the leaders of Pakistan clamour for Kashmir. Agreement over Kamshmir would not in itself produce a miracle. One

may reasonably anticipate subsequent clamour for a corridor between West and East Pakistan. Not unless the seven hundred years of joint Hindu and Muslim living climax into physical and cultural approximation, would a single item of statecraft be more than an astute act. The Indian attitude is not much different. Should Pakistan be willing to experiment with unhindered travel, India would ask for common citizenship. If Pakistan were ready for common defence unaffiliated to the blocs, India might move a step beyond and ask for Pakhtoonistan or united Bengal. Unsatiable hunger is inherent in the situation between India and Pakistan, as long as the Hindu and Muslim minds do not reach for identification at least in the reading of their joint history.

I had at one time hoped overmuch. In a speech I made at the Gole Market of Delhi immediately after partition, from which Mr. Jinnah quoted extensively and angrily and which made him intervene with the India Government, I made a forecast of early India-Pakistan reunion into Hindustan. Never before or after have I made such an unwise forecast. My wish ran away with my intelligence. Nobody could indeed have foreseen Gandhiji's death at that time. In any case, my calculations were based on his continuing presence. Even so, the other factors which entered into my calculation have been found to be slender or almost lacking. I had hoped that India would prosper under a national Government, at least to some degree. Such a prosperity on this side of the frontier would have aroused unsettling envy on the other side. Such a hope did not indeed last out the first few months of freedom and vanished after Gandhiji's death. How I could have been so ardent but foolish, albeit for a few months, I cannot to this day understand except on the premise of Gandhiji's continuing presence. I like million others foolishly expected miracles from that man. There are no miracles except discovery of and adherence to truths and hard work. A second factor that went wrong related precisely to my hope in growing approximation between Hindu and Muslim in India, as would have influenced the mind of Pakistan towards reunion.

I was definitely unwise on the score of time, but was I so

in respect of the quality of my forecast. The frontier between India and Pakistan has few natural barriers and consists of the slender waters of ponds and rivers and not of separating seas. Attempts are being made to divide the single language into two, that of Pakistan being almost wholly Arabic or Persian and that of India entirely Sanskritic. Such attempts may reasonably be expected not to succeed. Unintelligibility or lifelessness would so assail these efforts at an artificially selective language that they would be given up at no distant future. I am of course assuming that the world would not continue to be wicked indefinitely. The Atlantic-Soviet rivalry would diminish at least to the point when it does not seek to spin India and Pakistan against each other. Physical and cultural approximation between Hindu and Muslim inside India and as a consequence or simultaneously, that between Pakistan and India resulting in reunion of Hindustan is a wish and a prayer and also a probability.

GUILTY MEN OF INDIA'S PARTITION

I

I have read Maulana Azad's book in discontinuous stretches but in its entirety. I do not have it with me at this moment of reviewing it, which can be an advantage in relation to the large scale, but a disadvantage in matters of detail.

A most lasting impression, which the book has left on me, concerns the behaviour of groups and peoples. Groups and peoples are quite often unable to perceive their own true and large interests and are easily led into running after doubtful or less fruitful ends. Maulana Azad has nowhere talked of this directly. He may not have been aware of it, when he was dictating the book. But there is no doubt that Maulana Azad was a good Muslim and Mr. Jinnah not quite such a good Muslim and yet the Muslims of India chose to follow the man who did not serve their interests so well. Even at that time, there was another Muslim who was greater than both of them, but he was a Muslim alone by birth and faith and not in politics. Maulana Azad has talked of him rather meanly, and that is not surprising.

In calling Maulana Azad a better Muslim than Mr. Jinnah, I am not at all concerned with their religiosity, the degree to which they understood the tenets of Islam or practised them in their lives. I am only concerned with the extent to which they served the interests of the Muslims of India. Both of them strove, outwardly very outspokenly, and also perhaps with inward passion, to realise Muslim interests as distinct from the interests of the Indian people as a whole. The Maulana was a better servant of Muslim interests than was Mr. Jinnah but the Muslims rejected his service.

This hit me in the eye, when I re-read Maulana Azad's statement on the last but one British proposal and which is reproduced in the book. The British had then proposed a constitution, which would grant maximum autonomy to the provinces. In fact, the Central Government of India would have been left alone with defence, foreign policy and communications and such other powers as a province may have chosen to grant it, but nothing else. The provinces would have further been grouped together under different categories such as the north east or the north west. Mr. Azad claims co-parenthood of this proposal with the British Viceroy of that time. The proposal was ultimately rejected.

Mr. Azad's statement on it is a model of clarity both of thought and expression. He asserts that a scheme of partition of India would damage Muslim interests. It would give nothing much of substance to Muslims in provinces where they were in majority in addition to what they would get under a constitution of maximum provincial autonomy. It would, however, take away much from the Muslims of the larger part of India, where they would be left without effective voice. Subsequent events have proved him to be true. The partition of India has hurt Muslims just as much as it hurt Hindus, if not more. Maulana Azad's statement is, however, a little too logical, a little too smooth, which is perhaps a characteristic of men otherwise talented who are not big enough to mould events.

This proposal of maximum provincial autonomy would assuredly have safeguarded Muslim interests to an amazing degree. It would perhaps not have satisfied their vanity or their craving for greatness, two impulses so difficult to disentangle from each other. It may also have led to much friction between Hindus and Muslims and a state of frustration among either, though not necessarily so large as to be impossible to overcome. In his statement, Mr. Azad is not aware either of the frailty of man or of the reality of the situation. He is remarkably rational in his desire to safeguard Muslim interests. The Muslims of India would have done well by their own interests to follow this rational leader of theirs. Therein lies the tragedy of man.

Man is ever after insubstantial greatness which eludes him. He is continually beset with false fears of his own creation. Between these two mill-stones of imaginary fears and vain greatness, he is ground into a tragedy often not even on the grand scale. The partition of India was a mean tragedy, although its proportions were terrific and soured more lives than many other great tragedies.

If the Muslim group of India was unable to recognise its self-interest, what of the Hindu group or the Indian people as a whole ? There is no doubt that rationality was equally lacking among the Hindus and therefore among the people as a whole. It is lacking to this day among very large numbers. A common fallacy is afloat that if Muslim interests are safeguarded by a scheme, it must then in the nature of things hurt Hindu or other interests. Groups within a people are often a prey to this fallacy. They believe axiomatically that the interests of one group are inimical to those of another. That may, of course, be true of some cases, but wholly untrue or partially true of others. What exactly was a Hindu or a Muslim interest, before the country was partitioned, and what is it to this day ?

On a closer investigation of Hindu or Muslim interest as it was then or as it is now, one may select certain examples from the field of parliamentary, governmental and trade interests as also those of the general economy or collectivity. Undoubtedly, there cannot be two presidents of a single republic nor two parliament members of a single constituency. Attempts at a solution of this conflict have indeed been made in some countries of the world. Their constitution guarantees, for instance, the post of president to one group and that of the prime minister to the other. But such a solution would hurt one or the other group and would also cause heartburn in the event of one authority becoming more effective than the other. One may safely assert that Mr. Azad's proposal would have hurt this limited and parliamentary Hindu interest, at least in the early stages.

The situation with regard to another limited interest in the field of government service would have been somewhat similar. As there are only a limited number of government jobs to go round in a country that is exceedingly poor, particularly of the

higher reaches of government service, the participation of Muslims in state service of India as a whole would have been considerably larger than their numbers would have warranted. This would have hurt a limited interest of the Hindus pertaining to government service.

In relation to industry and trade, the situation would have been reversed. Hindu predominance both of ownership and working personnel would have continued. Efforts at increased Muslim participation in industry and trade would undoubtedly have been made and these would have led to much friction and frustration. On the whole and only, comparatively speaking, an undivided India would have hurt a limited Muslim interest in the sphere of industry and trade.

As soon as we leave these limited spheres of interest and inspect the unlimited spaces of general interest such as policies relating to price, artisans or agriculturists, the situation is entirely different. In any country, the price of essential commodities must be the same for all groups, except, of course, small groups of leaders and high government servants, who are price-favoured in a controlled economy. On the overwhelming mass of the population, the effect of price policy is equal. It is almost certain that an undivided India would have followed a price policy more favourable to the consumer. The people as a whole and consumers as a whole are synonymous terms. Nothing hurts the people as much as when consumers are orphaned which is the case in partitioned India and appears also to be so in Pakistan in spite of its military dictatorship. Hindus and Muslims have both suffered terribly by the hurt of consumers' price; their interests would have been jointly and better served in an undivided India.

In similar manner, policies relating to cottage craft and artisans and agriculturists would have benefited or hurt Hindu and Muslim equally. An unprejudiced scheme of education would similarly inform the mind and elevate the soul of Hindu and Muslim alike. It is, therefore, abundantly clear that Hindu and Muslim interests coincided before the partition as they do now in relation to the overwhelming mass of the population and to the unlimited spaces of general economy or collectivity, while

they were at variance in respect of the limited fields of parliamentary or administrative participation. Precisely this limited field of parliamentary and administrative participation has loomed so large before men that it has blinded their vision or at least distorted it beyond safety.

The partition of India is a result of this blinded or distorted vision. Maulana Azad's book contains at least one lie on each page and it is also wholly unreliable in respect of historical interpretation, but it has done a distinct service in reopening public debate on the issue of partition of India. Was there a guilt attaching to partition and, if so, who were the guilty men ? Would repentance of an earlier guilt bring redemption or benefit in the years to come ? If partition was not inevitable in the past, need it be permanent for the future ? In any event, could men and women on both sides of the frontier rise to better levels of living on a fresh examination of the past ?

Mr. Azad has adopted the style of stories for children in dealing with events leading up to partition. Every thing seems to happen with a suddenness and there is some extraordinary impulse behind each occurrence. The partition of India is thus made to appear as a fruit of Lord Mountbatten's mind. He persuades Sardar Patel to take a bite. That is his first success. Jointly with Sardar Patel and Her Ladyship, Lord Mountbatten achieves his second success by persuading Mr. Nehru to accept the scheme of partition. His third and ultimate success comes when Mahatma Gandhi is eventually persuaded. The Maulana has not cared to disclose the charms or the secret potions with which Gandhiji's conversion took place. He was the only one to stay opposed to partition right up to the end. The whole story is an uninteresting lie.

A preliminary road bloc must be set aside. An impression has been allowed to grow in the land as though Lady Mountbatten exercised some malign influence on Mr. Nehru. The whispering galleries of history may in fact turn this lie into truth. Maulana Azad is the first to attempt for history what contemporary gossip has been doing for several years. However much such revelations may be of immediate benefit to Mr. Nehru, for they exonerate him from direct guilt and make him appear as a

victim of charms or guiles, they do damage to his reputation in the long run and leave untouched the deeper currents of political processes.

Lest history should attach to Lady Mountbatten the importance that contemporary gossip does, it would be wise to recall an almost similar role that was ascribed to Madame Chiang Kai Sheik. The Madame from China had in fact roused Lord Linlithgow, the British Viceroy of that time, to the mild wail that she was interested too much in her boy friend's eyelashes to care for him. There had been earlier periods, when Mr. Nehru had befriended more plebeian and more revolutionary women, the Ellen Wilkinsons of India and Britain. I am perfectly certain that if Mrs. Khrushchev were available and if she were pleasant and sociable, Mr. Nehru would run after her in the same way as he has run after these other women. Let there be no misunderstanding. He would do so only when affairs of the Indian State warranted it, naturally, according to his estimate of them. It would, therefore, be unwise to ascribe a political meaning to these friendships.

Mr. Nehru has used Lady Mountbatten for his political purposes. It may be well to supplement this estimate of the situation with its counterpart. Lady Mountbatten and her Lord have similarly used Mr. Nehru for their political purposes. A certain amount of tenderness naturally creeps into all such relationships of mutual advantage. Whether there has ever been anything more than tenderness is a fit subject alone for researchists of a distant future, who are at a loss for a subject and who pick up minor topics of history and romance for their investigation. The people of India would do well to acquire the maturity not to waste their time nor to vulgarise their taste over such contemporary gossip. I am in fact inclined to comment on Mr. Nehru's lack of chivalry. He does not seem to respect his friendships beyond their political value.

I can well understand that events of State should have drifted him away from Madame Chiang Kai Sheik, but his behaviour in the United States when he was there and she was lying ill in a hospital, was atrocious. He should have met her. If he is tender in his relationships, that tenderness lasts only as long

as there is a political value. Incidentally, Maulana Azad's book contains hundreds of inaccuracies of detail. As far as I recollect, the present Prime Minister of India was standing on his head on the lawns of the Kutub for the benefit of the Chinese foreign minister and his party, when the Chiangs were away in Agra seeing the Taj Mahal.

Maulana Azad has definitely erred in describing Lord Mountbatten's role as a maker of policies. Lord Mountbatten was indeed an accomplished executor of policies that were made for him by his superiors. It is exceedingly childish and puerile to suggest, as the Maulana does, that Lord Mountbatten evolved the scheme of partition off his own hat, after the scheme of maximum provincial autonomy evolved by another man, who happened to be his predecessor, Lord Wavell, had run into trouble. Such a reading of history ascribes to viceroys the role that prime ministers and kings do not possess.

Maulana Azad, like most other Indian writers on contemporary events, makes the mistake of seeing a Napoleon in every corner. He rouses the suspicion that he had thought of himself and of Lord Wavell as the unsuccessful Napoleons, and of Lord Mountbatten as the Napoleon of the successful period. There is always this danger in the writing of memoirs and autobiographies. Minor actors impelled by petty motives tend to cast themselves into great roles. Lord Mountbatten's was indeed a major role, though not a great one, in so far as he executed the policies, that his government gave him, remarkably well.

Governments and armies do not work on single policies in any situation. They have always a string of alternative policies to meet a situation. There may at times be as many as a dozen alternative political plans to resolve a political situation or a dozen alternative military plans from which one may be chosen for the actual assault. There are several strings to any bow of a foreign office, army or government. The string of partition of India must have been there in the India Office of Britain for a very long time. On my knowledge of the doings of the British government as of any other experienced government, I have safely deduced that it was there well before Mr. Jinnah started talking of it around 1940.

Such plans do not indeed possess a constant value. They are kept away in appropriate cabinets of the government, and, although they may not be immediately or ever used, they are prepared with great devotion and to the minutest detail. I suspect that the scheme of partition was beginning to be decisive in early 1946 even when Lord Wavell was attempting to put through the scheme of maximum provincial autonomy. 1942, the INA, the Naval Mutiny, street demonstrations by the people and, perhaps the continuing existence of Mahatma Gandhi had convinced the British that they had to go.

It was natural for the British to prepare and execute plans as would give them maximum benefit out of an India from where they had departed, no matter how much these hurt her. The scheme of partition hurt India as few other things have done. It was the last and most shameful act of British imperialism on Indian soil. As time passes, the tinsel glory of voluntary grant of independence will fade before the unrelieved infamy of partition. Historians will wonder and explore how the leadership of a freedom movement had become so vile as to turn into accomplices of such an imperialist infamy. While talking of plans and proposals made by governments and executed by their agents or consuls, it is as well to think of the nonchalance with which political movements in India in the current century have prepared their resolutions and plans. They pass a resolution, sit back, watch reactions, and expect events to flow out of their resolves, as some kind of a chain of sympathetic reactions, without their having to do anything much by way either of execution or preparation. Without being actively aware of it, Mr. Azad has brought this valuable fact out in relation to the Quit India movement of 1942. He has presumably erred in thinking by analogy in believing that the British government prepared its plans on the pattern of the Congress party. Why India's politics has suffered from lack of active preparation and organisation before the occurrence of an event may well be due to the overwhelming importance attached to the word and the spirit, which would cancel the preparatory act and the body. I may revert to this aspect of the Indian situation when examining Maulana Azad's analysis of Mahatma Gandhi and the war years.

Why did Sardar Patel become an accomplice in the British crime ? I can imagine the answer only by examining the conduct of his colleague, Mr. Nehru, the more influential person and also because I am better aware of the facts of his case. Before I enter into such an examination, I would like to describe the meeting of the Congress working committee which accepted the scheme of partition. Two of us socialists, Mr. Jaya Prakash Narayan and I, were specially invited to this meeting. Barring us two, Mahatma Gandhi and Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, none spoke a single word in opposition to partition.

Maulana Azad sat in a chair throughout the two days of this meeting in a corner of the very small room which packed us all, puffed away at his endless cigarettes, and spoke not a word. He may have been pained. But it is silly of him to try to make out as though he were the only one opposed to partition. Not only did he keep unbrokenly silent at this meeting, he also continued in office as a minister of partitioned India for an entire decade and more. I may concede, and even understand, that he was unhappy at the partition and tried to oppose it in his own way at informal or tête-à tête meetings. But this was an opposition that did not object to the service of the thing opposed—a strange combination of opposition and service in a conscience which was greatly wise or equally elastic. It might be interesting to explore Maulana Azad's conscience, for I sometimes suspect that wisdom and elasticity go together.

Acharya Kripalani was a pathetic figure at this meeting. He was president of the Congress party at that time. He sat drowsily and reclined at this meeting. At some point in the debate, Mahatma Gandhi referred to the exhausted Congress president and I shook his arm in deep annoyance. He volunteered the information that he was suffering from a bad headache. His opposition to partition must have been sincere, for it was also personal. But the disease of old age and exhaustion had come over this fighting organisation of freedom in its moment of greatest distress.

Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan spoke a bare two sentences. He expressed his sorrow over the fact that his colleagues had accepted the scheme of partition. As a small mercy, he wanted

them to find out if the proposed plebiscite in the north-west frontier could include the alternative of independence alongside of the two other choices of accession to India or Pakistan. He spoke not a word more at any stage; he must have been so pained.

Mr. Jaya Prakash Narayan spoke some brief but definitive remarks against partition in a single stretch and was silent for the rest of the meeting. What made him do that ? Was he disgusted at the way the working committee was going about the business of partitioning the country ? Or, did he consider it prudent to keep quiet in the face of a leadership so stubbornly united for acceptance of the partition ? His character is probably a mixture of healthful responses at some stage and prudence for most of the time, a very irritating mixture, no doubt, which has often made me very angry with him.

My own opposition to partition was persistent and vocal, but it could not have been serious enough and I now recollect some false notes. In any event, my opposition could not have moved mountains. It could only have been on record as the healthful opposition of a fighter for freedom without much influence. Nevertheless, the absence of serious opposition to partition even from a man like me, who had absolutely no selfish axes to grind showed the depths of weakness and fear to which our people and I, as an ordinary one among them, had fallen. I may have occasion to reveal some of the aspects of my opposition. What is of significance is Mahatma Gandhi's intervention at this meeting.

I should like especially to bring out two points that Gandhiji made at this meeting. He turned to Mr. Nehru and Sardar Patel in mild complaint that they had not informed him of the scheme of partition before committing themselves to it. Before Gandhiji could make out his point fully, Mr. Nehru intervened with some passion to say that he had kept him fully informed. On Mahatma Gandhi's repeating that he did not know of the scheme of partition, Mr. Nehru slightly altered his earlier observation. He said that Noakhali was so far away and that, while he may not have described the details of the scheme, he had broadly written of partition to Gandhiji.

I will accept Mahatma Gandhi's version of the case, and not Mr. Nehru's, and who will not ? One does not have to dismiss Mr. Nehru as a liar. All that is at issue here is whether Mahatma Gandhi knew of the scheme of partition before Mr. Nehru and Sardar Patel had committed themselves to it. It would not do for Mr. Nehru to publish vague letters which he might have written to Mahatma Gandhi doling out hypothetical and insubstantial information. That was definitely a hole-and-corner aspect of this business. Mr. Nehru and Sardar Patel had obviously between themselves decided that it would be best not to scare Gandhiji away before the deed was definitely resolved upon.

Keeping turned towards Messrs. Nehru and Patel Gandhiji made his second point. He wanted the Congress party to honour the commitments made by its leaders. He would therefore ask the Congress to accept the principle of partition. After accepting the principle, the Congress should make a declaration concerning its execution. It should ask the British government and the Viceroy to step aside, once the Congress and the Muslim League had signified their acceptance of partition. The partitioning of the country should be carried out jointly by the Congress Party and the Muslim League without the intervention of a third party. This was, I thought so at that time and still do, a grand tactical stroke. Much has been said about the saint having simultaneously been a tactician, but this fine and cunning proposal has, to my knowledge, not so far been put on record.

Dr. Khan Saheb, the elder brother of the Frontier Gandhi, was the first and the only one to shout the proposal down as utterly impracticable. There was no need for anyone else to oppose the proposal. It was not considered. I remonstrated with Dr. Khan that the beauty of the proposal lay precisely in its impracticability and that India would not lose if Mr. Jinnah and the Congress representatives failed to agree on how to partition the country without British assistance. Who listened to such remonstrances ? The proposal was in itself cunning, but, in view of the determination of the Congress leadership to buy freedom at the price of unity, it made no practical meaning.

It would have made meaning if Gandhiji had backed his proposal up with the prospect of action.

I have sometimes wondered why Dr. Khan who stood to lose by the partition, should have wanted to show its impracticality. Most men are simple minded. They react by habit. They do not by themselves see a proposition in all its implications, its beginning and its sequel, and tend to consider it as though with the mind of habit. Mr. Jinnah was impossible to agree with, so went the reaction of most Congressmen, particularly Muslim Congressmen. Dr. Khan was only speaking up this habitual reaction. He did not realise that the impossible Mr. Jinnah could, under Gandhiji's proposal, save India precisely because of his impossibility.

Messrs. Nehru and Patel were offensively aggressive to Gandhiji at this meeting. I had a few sharp exchanges with both of them, some of which I shall relate. What appeared to be astonishing then as now, though I can today understand it somewhat better, was the exceedingly rough behaviour of these two chosen disciples towards their master. There was something psychopathic about it. They seemed to have set their heart on something and, whenever they scented that Gandhiji was preparing to obstruct them, they barked violently.

Evidence concerning some strange doings is now accumulating. Maulana Azad adds his testimony, such as it is, to the proposition I have long maintained that Mr. Nehru was a potential collaborationist during some months of 1942. There are indeed no collaborationists on the winning side; there are only allies and freedom fighters. The allies and the British won the war. The word collaborationist is applied alone to such Frenchmen and East Europeans who collaborated with the Axis. But the essential point is that of collaboration with an occupying power.

Mr. Nehru was prepared to collaborate with such an occupying power. Mr. Azad has stated that Mr. Nehru wanted to go into an enlarged executive council of the Viceroy without any definite British statements that this council would act like a cabinet during the war and that India would be free after the achievement of peace. So hungry was Mr. Nehru either for the

enjoyment of administrative authority, a highly selfish aim, or for the defeat of fascism, a highly impersonal aim, two aims which appear to be so dissimilar on the surface. Could there, perhaps, be a bond of commonality between the two aims ?

It has recently been suggested to me that the mad reactions of Mr. Nehru during some months of 1942, when he publicly declared his intention and capacity to raise millions of guerillas in order to fight Japan, were at least partly motivated by his jealousy of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose. Mr. Bose had gone over to the Axis. He could at least claim that he was raising a national army for India, while Mr. Nehru's antics amounted to the service of the British crown. Nobody would now deny that an undercurrent of jealousy had always marred the relationship between Mr. Nehru and Mr. Bose. During these early and terrible months of 1942, Mr. Nehru must often have dreaded the prospect of being overrun not only by Japan but also by his old rival. Behind his neurotic espousal of the cause of the Allies against the Axis, even when India lay prostrate under the allied heel, may have lain such private reasons. I would however not ascribe any primary importance to these reasons. They may have added fuel to the fire, but they did not start it.

Mr. Nehru has been an anti-fascist of long standing and one may recall how he had refused to meet Signor Mussolini in the twenties and that he has ever been a friend of the British Left. It might be worthwhile to examine the sources of his extraordinary friendship with the British Left and the anti-fascists, but I do not intend to do so here. Jealousy of Mr. Bose may have been a strong contributory factor, but no primary importance need be attached to it.

I had always been foolish enough to prefer Mr. Nehru to Mr. Bose, and a strong additional reason for this folly may well have been Mahatma Gandhi, but I could not repress my strong dislike of Mr. Nehru's attitudes during early 1942. In my presidential speech at the Almora district political conference, I had called Mr. Nehru a 'quick-change artist' and had warned him, if he did not mend his ways, that the people, and particularly the youth, would listen to just one man when they were then

listening to two. I had continually remonstrated with Mr. Nehru, publicly as well as privately—and I could be pretty sharp on certain occasions in my younger days—about his neurotic pro-British and pro-Allies attitudes.

My speech on the 'quick-change artist' was front-paged in some Allahabad newspapers precisely on the day that the All-India Congress Committee began its meetings in that city. I was later told that some female friends of Mr. Nehru had hallooed him with that sobriquet for some time after. On my return from Almora, I felt somewhat awkward at having to call on Mr. Nehru, but my relationship with him was such that I had to. Eventually I did so in the afternoon. He was not in his room.

As I was preparing to go away, not without relief, Maulana Azad, who was just then stepping out of his room, called me from behind and told me how pleased he was with my speech. I did not understand the cause of Maulana's pleasure, but I succeeded in repressing my desire to say something caustic. Mr. Azad and Mr. Nehru had at that time teamed up marvellously in order to circumvent Gandhiji and the people's desire for freedom. The Maulana's book has now made this episode clear to me. There was a slight difference between the two attitudes of Mr. Nehru and Mr. Azad.

Mr. Azad was a little more concerned about the freedom of India and the immediate powers of the India government than was Mr. Nehru. Mr. Azad has said in his book that he did not wish to accept the British proposal unless declarations of the India government acting as though it were a cabinet and ultimate independence were made. Mr. Nehru was for straight out acceptance of the British proposal, although a British correspondent in India had at that time called it the handiwork of an enemy of Britain. Mr. Nehru had indeed fallen very low during those months. Mr. Azad caught me by the arm and almost forcibly led me into the room where Mr. Nehru and his relations were having tea. It was one of the coldest teas that I ever had in Mr. Nehru's house, though I must admit that he warmed up somewhat at the end. That was precisely his strong point at that time. He was extraordinarily flexible. Or,

perhaps, it was so because I was still his disciple, however heretical. This extraordinary flexibility of Mr. Nehru saved him from hurtling downhill to sure degradation and ruin, which would have been his fate if he had persisted in his early 1942 attitudes.

II

If generosity should ascribe Mr. Nehru's potential collaborationism in early 1942 to his anti-fascist passion, what of his later acceptance of the country's partition ? The story is not as simple as has hitherto been made out. To make sense, its various parts must hang together. The readiness to be seduced by the foes of human dignity and happiness, to have been willing at one time to give away freedom for the sake of anti-fascism, and to have subsequently bartered away the unity of the country, can be the consequence alone of our opportunist desire for office. There is a strong likeness in these two major events of Mr. Nehru's life. It would not do to ascribe one to his democratic world outlook and the other to his propensity to fall under spells. In the effort to shield his colleague, Mr. Azad has made use of secondary and perhaps misleading information and has suppressed the primary facts.

A strong possibility exists that Mr. Azad may not have been the chief culprit of this distortion of history. Two other persons have collaborated on this work. Mr. Nehru has denied taking a hand in revisions or corrections of the book. That may be true in a literal sense. He did not have to tell his underling in the India government, the man who wrote the Maulana's book, to make any specific corrections. All that Mr. Nehru need have done is to disclose certain facts and to air certain opinions, at a private tea with the Maulana's scribe. I strongly suspect that Mr. Kabir and Mr. Nehru are at least partly responsible for the puerilities and inaccuracies of Mr. Azad's book, but, in the absence of positive evidence, the Maulana must take all the blame. In order to buttress his theory of Mr. Nehru's propensity to aristocratic or female persuasion, which may be entirely true in a secondary way, Mr. Azad has started the silly story that

the prime minister was persuaded to partition only after the Mountbattens came on the scene. I have deliberately not read many records of those days written by people like Messrs. Pyarelal, Nehru and Mountbatten's advisers. Some thing keeps me away from them. I recoil from them as I would from any suppression or distortion of the truth. I would not have read the Maulana's book, but for the public interest that it has once again aroused on the subject of India's partition. I am, therefore, unable to say whether any positive evidence has already been published to establish Mr. Nehru's conversion to the idea of partition prior to the Mountbatten's arrival. I am certain that the evidence is there in the archives.

I may be permitted to refer to a private conversation with Mr. Nehru in Noakhali around the end of 1946, to which I had more or less been forced by Mahatma Gandhi. Mr. Nehru spoke of the water, slime, bush and tree that he found everywhere in East Bengal. He said that that was not the India he or I knew and wanted with some vehemence to cut East Bengal away from the main land of India. That was an extraordinary observation. The man was obviously speaking under an emotional strain. He had set his heart on something. He was trying to discover enduring reasons of geography in order to still some small voice of conscience that he may still have been hearing. These reasons of geography might under other circumstances prove how necessary it is for the Ganga and Jamuna plains to stay joined with their luxuriant terminus. But once the idea of partition came to be accepted as a condition precedent to India's freedom, no matter that the acceptance was still very private and not even communicated to Mahatma Gandhi, the geography of East Bengal could well become abominable. For myself, I have found the gay laughter of East Bengal women unparalleled in all the world.

These men were old and tired. They were near their deaths, or so at least they must have thought. It is also true that they could not have lived much longer without the restorative of office. They had begun looking back on their life of struggle with a sense of hopeless despair. Their leader was not allowing them to temporise over much. What fancies had

started assailing them can only be a matter of speculation and will differ according to each case. Some may have been hungering for office and the power and comfort and pelf that goes with it. Some may have been wanting to change their country and leave their mark on history and mistakenly believing that they could do neither unless they ran the government at least for some years before their death. Yet others may have been frightened at the prospect of being regarded as the mere failures of history, as persons of no importance. It is possible that these various fancies, so different as they look from each other on the surface, are all aspects of a single desire. The enjoyment of power, the improvement of the country through government and the fear of being considered a failure, are different aspects of the single wish to do good to the country with one's own hands with the help of the administration. I am not such a small man as these, and I say this not out of conceit, but with some gratefulness to them, for I stand on their shoulders and such as I am and thousands of other ordinary people like me are, is at least partly due to their devoted labour and influence. But I must make a confession.

There are moments when I am also assailed not so much with the desire to do good or to enjoy power, although I suspect I smell them at times, as with the fear of being considered a failure. I hope that these fancies will never be more than momentary. There is not the slightest doubt that the socialist movement in India has floundered on the sharp rocks of these fancies. India's socialists like their predecessors and teachers, the leaders of the Congress party, have wanted to do administrative good with their own hands and to enjoy power. They have tried to play the tricky game of politics. They did not have a prophet like Mahatma Gandhi to save them from their crasser degradation. They did not also possess the craftsmanship of a Nehru or a Patel. Their opportunism has not yielded them fruit as it did in the case of their craftier predecessors. They have sinned without pleasure. All politics without prophetic zeal must necessarily deteriorate in this fashion. Socialists have wanted to administer society and to improve it if they could; they should have wanted to effect revolutionary changes.

The revolutionary, down to the lowest village revolutionary, is a bit of a prophet. He wishes to change his people, their mind as well as their life. He is not distressed overmuch if he cannot witness the last stages of this change in his lifetime. He is satisfied that he is piling up the conditions for that change, which will most assuredly be accomplished by his successors.

The dose of politics has been in excess of the dose of revolution in the mental make-up of India's socialists, who have shown a tendency to deteriorate in middle age, while Congress leaders have at least been able to stand it out until the advent of old age. Nevertheless, the curious fact must be noted that the prophet failed to infect his contemporaries and his successors with revolutionary patience. I revert to the will of Messrs. Nehru and Patel. It was the corroded will of tired old men. I imagine that what has been said of Mr Nehru applies equally to Mr. Patel. However, it may well be that Sardar Patel acted more simply and was the greater idealist of the two, although he did not leave behind him misleading trails of high-souled effusions.

I cannot resist the temptation to recall a very significant expression of corroded will on the part of Mr. Nehru. That must have been around May-June 1946. I had not met him after coming out of jail and felt no special urge to do so. But he sought me out without previous notice on the fourth storey of a house and made me promise to spend the evening with him. After dinner, the two of us went to his corner of the lawn and he opened his full charms on me. I suppose he can be exceedingly charming when he so desires and when there is some possibility of a mutuality of interest. He asked me if I would speak or he or if I wanted the interview to be a long silence. I asked him to do it the way which most pleased him. At some stage of the conversation, I warned him of the danger that he was running, a danger that I wished to warn him against with all my strength. I warned him that he was going the liberal way, that he was losing faith in his colleagues and in the Congress organisation, that he was hankering to obtain control over the administrative machinery in order to do good, that he had started thinking a little too highly of Indian Civil Service men and such like and that he would soon become a moderate if he did not mind his steps.

He did not at first deny my charge. He told me with some vehemence how low Congressmen had fallen and that I did not possibly possess a full picture of their degradation.

He told me of an annual report of the Uttar Pradesh congress tribunal for internal elections, which stated that congressmen violated every single section of the Indian Penal Code in their fights with each other. I could not understand how the whole penal code could come into operation but was again told with some vehemence that that was so, which of course may have been true. Politicians tend to fall rather low in their fights. I was also told how Mr. Nehru had come out of his jail some months earlier than I did, with probably the same ideals and schemes. He took up the work of reorganising the Congress committee of his city, for he thought that he must demonstrate a scheme in detail before he could ask for its application in all the country. Within a bare three months, the Congressmen of his city had stopped meeting him, even such as were reputed to be no more than his lap-dogs.

I was then astonished. I can today somewhat understand Mr. Nehru's point of view, although I have very recently been told of the occasional Tammany Hall lapses of Mr. Nehru in respect of organisation. Nevertheless, I was not persuaded then as I am not now. I told Mr. Nehru that Congressmen had indeed fallen very low but that they were better than the civil service in respect of our need to overthrow foreign authority, and that was what mattered. I often have occasion to give myself a similar advice, for socialists who are tending to fall rather low are better than the well-behaved middle class in respect of our need to overthrow capitalism. When Mr. Nehru found that he could not persuade me, he changed his approach and tried to reassure me of his intention to continue his basic belief in the Congress flock.

This is where the trouble lay. Congress leaders were fed up with their following as they were with their own old age. I came up against this aspect of Mr. Nehru's thinking again in June-July 1946. He was made Congress president and he wanted to take Mr. Narayan and me into his committee, and additionally to make me the Congress general secretary.

We had three sessions, all past midnight and one reaching up to three in the morning. I will pass over all the other aspects of these meetings, and will disclose that Mr. Nehru rejected outright two of my demands, one, that no member of the Congress working committee should be a government minister, two, that some formula permitting benevolent criticism by the Congress party of its own government should be evolved, and partly accepted my third demand that the Congress president should keep out of the government.

The air was then thick with the impending Congress-British agreement. Mr. Nehru accepted the principle, but refused my request to apply it to his own person. He reminded me, not without an affectionate appeal for understanding, that the provincial ministries of 1937 and after had rarely responded to his suggestions, although he was then the Congress president. Advisers and executors are two different entities and, except in very rare circumstances, executors tend to follow their own line. I can today understand Mr. Nehru better than I did then. I, of course, refused his offer.

A question might be asked if my attitude towards power is not unbalanced at the other end of fright as that of Congress leaders has been at the end of temptation. Some are tempted by power. Some are frightened at the prospect of holding power. Both attitudes can become equally hazardous. A politician, who is also a statesman, would so strive that he is neither tempted by power nor shies at it. I should like to relate a story, which might show whether I have acted coyly when power seemed to approach. I have long wondered whether I should be relating stories that were personal to me, when I am reviewing events of national significance. After all, what happened to me personally did not affect the main flow of events. What, then, is the importance of these personal happenings ? In the first place, I can vouch for their authenticity. Secondly, what happened to me also happened to the people. The main actors of the drama of main events were not as near the people as I was. Their actions took place under one constraint or another. Mahatma Gandhi was a sole exception to this. That is why he was both in the main flow of events, and away from it at its fringes and beyond.

I was at the fringe of the main flow of events and so were my people. In a contemporary sense, the main actors have appeared to decide the destiny of the country, but who knows whether the activities of the people at the fringe will not ultimately shape the contours of the land both physically and spiritually in a more effective way. The main flow will pass off; much of it was dirty. The fringe might stay.

I had been part persuaded and part compelled to stay in the riotous area of Delhi, as I had earlier been made to stay in the areas of Calcutta and Noakhali. I do not know what made Gandhiji do this. I sometimes suspect that he used me as some kind of a safetyvalve, somewhat similar to the attachment of a grandparent to his grandchild, essentially for the purpose of relating stories, when he is hurt at his own sons and daughters straying away from him. I shall pass over the entire story and come to the morning when the newspaper report of the discovery of three hundred three rifles in a Muslim area enraged me. We had something to do with that area, for it was one of our workspots. One rifle had been discovered in a Muslim home, a rifle that carries the name 303. The news of one rifle with a specific marking had been falsified into the news of three hundred and three guns. Anybody would have been enraged, much more so those whose job it was to smoothen bulges and strains of Hindu-Muslim relationship. I went to Gandhiji, as I was, without my bath. I took the newspaper report with me. Flashing the report towards him, I thought I had made a complete argument, when I asked him why he was making people like me work pointlessly for Hindu-Muslim unity, when a single report of that kind emanating from the Department of Information and Broadcasting undid the work that we had patiently done for several days or weeks. Sardar Patel was in charge of this department.

Gandhiji remained completely unruffled and gave an unpredictable turn to the argument. He asked me if I could not take over the department. I laughed. He accused me of running away from office; he probably had in mind that earlier occasion when he had tried, probably more than Mr. Nehru, to make me the Congress general secretary. I turned serious

at once. I told Gandhiji that he should offer me something after he had decided that Congress leaders were not the best men in the country. Gandhiji tried to make fun of my wish; he asked me if I wanted him to declare that I was better than Mr. Nehru. I told Gandhiji, as much in banter as with conviction, that I found nothing wrong in the declaration, and that I should like to know what reasons he had against it. There was silence.

Some persons were present during this conversation and, as far as I recollect, some one from the prime minister's household. Gandhiji obviously did not want to carry the argument further in their presence. This saint, than whom there has been none saintlier in all history, was not so entirely public and open in his speech as has been made out. He detained me with one story after another—much to the annoyance of the people around him—on the next evening until it was time for him to go to bed. Then, he beckoned me to follow him into his bedroom. He asked me as to when I had found him saying that Messrs. Nehru and Patel were the best men in the country. I must have been a little vehement and at first told him that he had said it a dozen times and increased the number to a hundred and more in my subsequent vehemence. Gandhiji told me that my mind, which was earlier precise and capable of concentrated attention, appeared to be deteriorating. He added that he had never called these men the best in the land; he had only said that there were none better than them. Was this lawyer or saint ? I could well have told him that he was practising duplicity against his people by talking ambiguous language likely to mislead them. And, yet, the peerless subtlety of the logician gripped me and who knows whether the path of truth is not as sharp as the razor's or the lawyer's edge ? I should have argued the point out. Some innate chivalry held me back. I went silent and let him go to bed.

I have related the later part of the story, alone with a view to reveal a not very well-known feature of Mahatma Gandhi, although that is not directly relevant to the point about power that I was making. I had told Gandhiji that he should offer me office only after he thought that we were the best in the land or that there were none better than us. I should now be aware

of the distinction between the two wishes, of being the best in the land or there being none better, although I did not perhaps know at the time when I expressed my wish that it could have two edges. What did I mean by that wish ?

Cutting out the frivolity, there was only one possible meaning. I have always made a distinction, sometimes more through instinct or intuition than through logical comprehension, between office and power. Office, I hold, is a wearisome denigration of the self; power, I hold, is and ought to be at the centre of all political actions and it has sometimes fascinated me. Old or tired men are content with office. Straight people aspire for power. If they cannot wield governmental power as an agency of their beliefs, they are not generally upset. They are content to pile up people's power, change in thought, habit and action of the people appropriate to their belief, in the hope that its translation into governmental power will inevitably take place some day.

The actual making of decisions may not be as easy as I have made it out on paper. There may be a small no man's land between office and power, which skilled craftsmanship may use as a springboard to jump to higher levels, while a coy maiden's fright may make one run away from it. I may have made mistakes in refusing office when it was offered to me. If so, I have hurt only myself and the country very little. I am definite that Mr. Nehru and others like him hurt the country very much when they bought the freedom of the country at the price of its unity. Even if they had acted like coy maidens at the prospect of holding power, they could not have hurt the country so much. They could have waited and continued to strive. Another generation would have come, to whom governmental power would have been given as a genuine translation of people's power.

India's politics have hitherto lacked in grit, the hard core of a man or a belief that is impossible to grind. I do not think that, as a people, we have always lacked it in the past or that we shall ever lack it in the future. Gandhiji possessed it in great measure. He was unable to transmit it to his colleagues and followers. Whether he is to blame or the period in which he lived, or both, can be a subject for fruitful enquiry. I can only

say that this lack of grit and hard core caused the partition of the country as it is continuing to cause the rot in the socialist movement, two of the great disasters of our lives.

I should like to relate another story. I must have been somewhat peeved and also despairing, when I asked Gandhiji on some occasion to let me go away from Delhi, because I was not producing any results. He looked at me and was silent for a while and then asked me to drop him a postcard, whenever I succeeded in producing results, so that he could join me where I was. I had almost forgotten this story of great faith, unrelieved resignation and also unceasing labour. Immediate results are difficult to produce, when one is out for revolutionary changes.

A mental condition does not bear fruit, unless it finds suitable nourishment from the environment. The subjective condition of an old Congress leadership greedy for office would have done no damage to the country, if it were not supported by the objective condition of Hindu-Muslim rioting. In a situation where Hindu-Muslim relationships had become nearly impossible, old Congressmen's greed for office appeared on the surface in the garb of some high purpose. Some of them may not themselves have been aware of their low motivation. They could in fact feel the glow of righteousness, for when they were dismembering the country and preparing themselves for office, they could well believe that they were laying aside the impossible Hindu-Muslim problem. Large sections of the people also felt the same way about it. They thought that an impossible problem had been solved and freedom was won.

How impossible the Hindu-Muslim problem had become will be evident from the fact that, in spite of a natural curiosity and of long years in the fight for freedom, I could only learn second hand or worse of what Muslim Leaguers thought of their country and the world. I do not recollect having attended more than one public meeting of the Muslim League. The one occasion when I listened to Mr. Jinnah was at an annual conference of the Muslim League. This meeting has left a profound impression on me. Mr. Jinnah sat, looked and spoke like a king and his listeners watched him and listened to him as though he were their own chosen king. I have nowhere seen greater hypnosis

in all my life than at Hitler's meetings but this was something different. I have nowhere seen greater devoutness than at Gandhiji's meetings, but this was something different. There was a natural bond, not too explosive but also not easily shakable between Mr. Jinnah and his crowd, as though between a king and his subjects. There was also a certain primitive dislike of the stranger. I remember having felt very uncomfortable at this meeting. There were daggers in the eyes of those who looked at us, infidels of faith and of politics, or at least so I thought. Whether this atmosphere of separation and aggression or fear emanated from them or from me is not an essential point; the essential thing is that such an atmosphere was there.

In this atmosphere, death brushed me on several occasions as it did millions of others and took away hundreds of thousands of our countrymen. I shall ever remember the day when scores of people had collected on the Hindu side of the no man's land, when I had disappeared into the Muslim side for nearly two hours. This was in the Calcutta of 1946. For nearly a year, streets and quartiers had separated themselves on the basis of their faith and one was sealed to the other. There used to be a half-hour of brisk trading between the two sectors in no man's land, when one side brought its basket of eggs and the like and the other its foodgrains or something similar. I was told that the settlement of price used to be effected through sign language or loud shouts across the no man's land. One side would then half cross the no man's land when the other side had withdrawn some distance away from it. Gandhiji had talked me into staying on in such a Calcutta. When I asked him if he wished me to do anything particular, he had wanted me to take my own instructions and had added casually that if I could I should meet my Muslim friends in their homes and quarters.

Little did I realise what this meant when he said it. It was such a simple thing to do. One would not, in fact, attach much importance to a few persons of antagonistic faiths meeting now and then in their homes, when millions of them were at each other's throats. It is, however, such simple and concrete actions that pave the way for settlements which decide the destiny of mankind. There were, however, not many at that time who

were eager to pave such a way. But I had had occasion about four or five times to feel in my own person the meaning of Gandhiji's simple wish. I will ever remember some eyes that fastened themselves on us, when I and Barin Ghosh walked the two furlongs of this Muslim quarter up to my friend's house. The eyes spoke of murder. No Hindu had been in that quarter for nearly a year. Thousands of Hindus and Muslims had earlier been killed in that Calcutta of hostile separatism. I tried to smile my way by asking questions as to direction and number of the house.

The house we went to was a hostel for Muslim students. These students were almost all Muslim Leaguers, some of them presidents and commanders of their various organisations. Our friend was about the only socialist. We had soon a bunch around us. They gave us tea. They did not spare us any arguments. They asked me inconvenient questions as to whether I thought Mr. Jinnah to be a British agent. After that nakedly honest act of walking through lurking death, I could not well have returned a dubious or a soft answer. Some of these students were very angry. But I was in their home and man never entirely loses his humanity. Our act had, futhermore, established a bond of kinship among us. Some of these students complained to me that their vice-chancellor or the local Congress leaders had not visited them the way that I was doing, although they had been distressingly marooned in their little quarter on several days in that murderous city. I asked them if they fully realised the consequences of their wish. They laughed and told me that I was nevertheless alive and so the conversation went on for nearly two hours. At one stage the two Guptas, Balkrishna and Ashwini, joined us in the hostel, for they were beginning to be anxious about us on the other side of the no man's land. The students insisted on reaching us to the end of their quarter.

Sachin Mitra died in the effort to carry out Gandhiji's wish. Gandhiji must have also told him what he told me. On a particular day and in a particlar quarter, some Muslims who did not like such acts killed him. Sachin was a remarkable man. When we were together in the same students' organisation in Calcutta, he took the lead in commencing a mass meeting for

the boycott of the British Simon Commission without its announced president. Subhas Babu was to preside but had unduly delayed and Sachin made me preside instead. We had later gone our separate ways, I to Germany and he subsequently to England. My convictions had continued without a break. He had for a while changed, more externally, into somewhat of a dandy. I was upset with him during those days. I should have known better. This young man of early courage came back to his original self and bore witness to his faith in a way than which man knows no better. I am sometimes sad that Sachin is not still alive.

No memorial has yet been founded in Sachin's name. That brings me to the question of the numerous memorials that have been founded in the country in recent years. Among the best of them is the Kasturba memorial. I was recently asked if this best of memorials could be considered fair and just. I have not met a more lovable and kind-hearted woman than Kasturba. She fully deserved a memorial. But the point is whether she would have got one, if she had not been the wife of Mahatma Gandhi. I wonder whether Gandhiji acted rightly in associating himself with a memorial that was founded in his wife's honour, and whether he should not have put down any such efforts right at the beginning. Others, offensively vulgar, have followed in his steps. It has become customary for relations of a big man to demand and be given a share in the benefits and bigness of their famous or success fulrelative. I have been told of a saying in Rigveda that a big man should use his office or place to the advantage of his relations and his caste. I wonder whether such a *richa* is really there in the Rigveda, and, if so, whether the current practices of big men in India are not related over the centuries to the saying of the world's oldest book and also one of the most sacred. Much cultural reintegration will be necessary, before we can be worthy of men like Sachin Mitra, Shoebullah Khan and Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi who laid down their lives in the cause of Hindu-Muslim amity. We could then perhaps take a small clod of the earth where they were burnt or buried and mix them up and erect on them memorials meaningful to the eye as well as embodying some high social purposes.

I must relate another incident that took place in Chittagong on 17th August, 1946. On the previous day, I had had some intimation of the trouble ahead from the rumours that were floating concerning the Calcutta killings and also from the somewhat roused crowds that came to greet me at the wayside stations. My open-air meeting in Chittagong on a somewhat rising ground was divided into two by Muslim League hooligans. The district magistrate and the chief police officer of the district, both Muslims, had supervised operations in person until a few minutes before they began. One person in the audience, who had more self-respect than would allow him to flee from the meeting and the hooligans, was cut into two on the spot. Everybody fled except three persons who made some kind of a protective ring around me. For nearly five minutes, we stood our ground. The hooligans kept their distance—I do not know why—but bricks came flying at us from all directions. I was hit on the arm, back and the chest, oftener than I would care to remember. What amazed me then, and is still a source of wonder, whenever I remember the incident, was the agile and turnabout frequency with which my head ducked the bricks. Youth and life's stubborness to continue probably combine to create such situations of unwonted skill and persistence. I was ultimately prevailed upon to withdraw, and as far as I recollect, some importunate pushing-away was also done. This incident can still awake in me a minor regret as to why the hooligans held back or why I did not squat. The town, which had over 80 Muslims out of 100 of the population, was later given over to rioting, looting and general terror. The second police officer of the town, who was a Hindu, wanted to protect us for the night in his house, but we could not very well accept the protection of an authority which we were seeking to destroy. We saw and smelt that night what the terror of an over-powering majority can be over a minority. I was profoundly influenced by the incident and remember having made a somewhat melodramatic statement to the effect that such things could no longer be tolerated and a way-out had to be found. We did not know the realities of the situation, nor did we possess a plan to tackle them, at least I did not. I made a ridiculous effort, which

now appears to me to be comical in the extreme. I sent a Chittagong armoury raid hero, who had joined the Socialist Party, all the way to Delhi to meet the man who is now the prime minister of the country. I must have written in obvious distress and anger. I had forgotten, and was reminded only recently, that there was an answer to it. I have again been told of the appalling conversation that took place between my emissary and Mr. Nehru as well as Mr. Azad.

Mr. Nehru seemed at first to react with vigour and asked if Chittagong armoury raid heroes had to be told what to do in a situation of anxiety and distress. When my emissary asked him if this was a considered answer, Mr. Nehru wanted him to have another talk with him as well as Maulana Azad. The first and early vigour proved to be a mannerism, a style of speech, superficial froth, that conveys a false impression of something strong and deep underneath. India's leadership of the century, of course barring Gandhiji, and with the possible exception on occasions of Sardar Patel, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Mr. Jinnah, has been guilty of criminal flippancy, of an almost total lack of clearly conceived goals, and an equal absence of a careful and realistic plan to achieve them. The problem of Hindu-Muslim rioting was tackled precisely at such levels of flippancy. One may understand a person like me, who was not clear-sighted enough with regard to the Hindu-Muslim problem. But what of those who sat at the centre of events, of whom a clear grasp of reality and the way to tackle it may have reasonably been expected? But they were worse than me, and not only miscalculated criminally, but also acted with criminal intent. I was at no point a supporter of partition. They were. But opposition can be of three kinds : verbal, silent and active. Our opposition tended to be confined to words, when it did not actually become silent. The fear of a chronic and unresolvable situation of Hindu-Muslim riots may have been at the back of it. I will now try to recollect the weakness in my own armour at the meeting of the Congress Working Committee which discussed and accepted the scheme of partition.

My opposition to partition was combined with certain suggestions about the second best alternative. A serious and

outright opposition in politics is not an academic pursuit, nor an open policy of re-insurance with the choice of lesser evils. To the serious oppositionist, there is no lesser evil. There is just evil and good and he sets about to achieve the good and fight the evil. I remember having had some very sharp exchanges with Mr. Patel as well as Mr. Nehru, which I now realise must have been more wordy than real. Sardar Patel told me that older persons like him were only trying to give younger persons like me a country to change and improve. I reminded him that, if he was a general of the freedom fight, we had also been its soldiers, and that policies should be debated in an atmosphere of equality. Mr. Patel also told us that he would thenceforth talk to Mr. Jinnah with a lathi, upon which I reminded him that he had a year earlier promised to talk to him with a sword. I am sure that Mr. Patel did not quite realise what he was up against, nor what bitter fruit the schemes that he had laid with Mr. Nehru would bear.

At some point in the debate I had made a plea for the rejection of the two-nation theory, and had also made some flambuoyant assertions about continuing to cherish the undivided map of India. Mahatma Gandhi endorsed this point, which made Mr. Nehru throw a fit. To him this continual harping on Hindu and Muslim being brothers or one nation, when they were flying at each other's throat, appeared fantastic, as also this continual debate with Mr. Jinnah. I intervened to say how fantastic his observation was. Had the Americans ceased to be brothers and one nation, because they had fought a war amongst themselves for several years and killed hundreds of thousands, the north against the south ? Mr. Nehru knows how to smile at a lost point. But men like me were only scoring wordy points. The draft resolution with which Mr. Nehru had come armed to the meeting of the Committee, and which he produced dramatically after several hours of debate, when such feeble will of opposition as was there was tired, contained no reference to the rejection of the two-nation theory or to the cherishing of the undivided map of India. I can at least claim to have introduced, with Mahatma Gandhi's support, this point into the resolution which was subsequently accepted by the All-India Congress Committee.

I must also relate the story of the drafting committee which finally prepared the resolution. I do not know what made Mr. Nehru include me on this committee, along with Mr. Patel, Mr. Kripalani and one another, who might have been Mr. Azad. So inconsequential were the roles of these gentlemen of the Congress party outside of Mr. Nehru and Mr. Patel, that it is difficult to remember who was present and on what occasion. We had a session in Mr. Nehru's room after midnight. He gave us coffee. How these old men could drink coffee at that hour has now become a source of astonishment to me, for I can do that at my age with some risk. The nearness of office probably revives some people. Mr. Nehru may have, furthermore, included me on the committee because he had seen the chinks in my armour, or because I had not yet rejected him wholly. The point about the undivided map of India was made and accepted after a cursory argument. No other points were accepted. Here were men with the clear intent of buying freedom at the cost of partition and persons like me tried to resist them with unclear wills. Mr. Nehru did indeed try to school me in diplomacy, both of speech and behaviour, and rejected some of my points on the ground that they were undiplomatic. I do not recollect that any other member of the drafting committee had anything to say.

The country was partitioned in order to avoid further Hindu-Muslim rioting. Partition produced that which it was designed to avoid in such abundance that one may for ever despair of man's intelligence or integrity. Six hundred thousand women, children and men were killed, often with such lunacy that the killers seemed to be experimenting with a view to achieve yet newer forms of murder or rape. Fifteen million persons were uprooted from their homes and made to seek a living and habitat in regions that tended to become less friendly. This was probably the greatest migration, forced or willing, in all history. To this day some men are trying to find out as to who was more beastly, the Hindu or the Muslim. Such a research is in its very nature futile. When the Hindu—including Sikh—and the Muslim were both trying to discover new forms of atrocities, it makes no meaning to research into their record for ascertaining

as to who was less uncivilised. A far more profitable field of research would consist of ways in which civilised forms of behaviour break down. It is possible that the more civilised group suffers a greater breakdown in the event of an irrational rage overtaking it. One such event of rage, I witnessed in riot-torn Delhi after partition. A Muslim young man wished to accompany me on my rounds of the city. I had a premonition of sad events to come, but I did not possess the mean rationality to ask him to stay in his area. As we reached the area of the Faizbazar police station, a fair-sized group of Muslims, men, women and children, was running back and forth, with tear-streaked faces like hunted animals. We had the car stopped barely twenty paces away from the police station. The Muslim boy took command. My presence apparently gave him an incredible confidence in that riotous situation. I seemed to turn into stone. I knew that the situation was laden with disaster. At the same time, I did not possess the stomach to let a principle and an obviously reasonable proposition be stifled by caution and calculation. The Muslim youth stepped out of the car and tried to harangue the escapees into courage and return to their homes. Hindus and Sikhs started collecting on the roadside. The entire event had been unfolding like a nemesis and I had until that point observed it like a paralysed spectator. As the riotous crowd grew, I woke up out of my lethargy, shoved the Muslim youth into the car and stood guard on the footboard outside. Someone shouted my name, but it did not appear to impress every body. Most people implored me with folded hands to step aside, some took courage and tried to drag me away. Before they could do harm to the young man, I would be back again at my duty on the footboard. This happened twice or thrice. Here was clear evidence that not many persons can directly kill or injure and also that an agile alertness is born out of a sense of right and wrong. If something had happened to the Muslim youth and I had not tried seriously to prevent it, my self-respect would have been damaged beyond repair. An armed policeman or a soldier arrived on the scene after some time and handled the situation with great tact. No harm came to the youth nor to me, but we had both come very near

it. Mr. Azad talks of the administrative impartiality and courage of Mr. Nehru in the face of riotous situations. He has no word to say of the fairness or courage of hundreds of thousands of ordinary, unofficial people who had been schooled in the tradition of humanism or nationalism.

In a sense, we lived through frequent nightmares in those days. The trouble was not all of contemporary origin, nor was it merely political in the ordinary or surfacial sense of the term. Nearly eight centuries of conflict and occasional rapprochment had come to a climax. The Hindu had barricaded himself into a defensive purity. Occasionally some of these barricades in some sectors would be down, but the basic segregation from the Muslim in respect of food and marriage—barring princes who needed to retain their domains—continued. No ties of kinship hold such segregated groups together. In situations of such change, where the relative position of these groups is at issue, conflict and bloodshed would be difficult to avoid except under a most astute and creative statesmanship. I was recently told of an instance of such segregation, that hurt deeply. When some Hindus and Muslims of Burma and Singapore fled over the eastern Himalayas into Manipur, a Muslim young man, who had until then lived and suffered with the Hindus like a brother, was denied admission into nearly a dozen hotels and Dharmsalas. This Muslim youth later joined the Muslim League and rose to be the commander of its Kerala volunteers, although his reconversion to nationalism and his baptism into socialism took place soon after partition. I am sure that Aboo Saheb was not the only one to turn sour, however temporarily, and Hindu-Muslim rioting and partition are a result of the souring that came out of the Hindu segregating the Muslim.

The element of segregation among Hindu castes is undoubtedly of a different quality and much less in intensity or bitterness, but India would do well to become sensitive to it before it does further and irreparable damage. I obtained an interesting sidelight on partition from Mugalmian of Patna, a carder by caste, who never once strayed from the path of nationalism, that the backward castes among Muslims had generally held back from the Muslim League. They could also not have

been too enthusiastic except in riotous situations, and then also sections of them. The nationalist movement did at some stage try perfunctorily to follow a policy of encouragement to backward Muslims, the Momins, but the policy was too tactical to achieve satisfactory results. If all backward castes, among Hindu as well as Muslim, had been encouraged with a view to destroy the caste system and to achieve equality and if the nationalist movement had systematically pursued this policy at least from the beginning of non-co-operation, then India may not have been partitioned.

I have so far dwelt on the Hindu side of the mischief. The Hindus are more definitely to blame, for, not only are they the majority group, but they also determine the contours of India and have nowhere else to go. Their defensive purity has debilitated them at its best and rotted them at its worst. With a more expansive outlook on life they could perhaps take the sting out of the Indian expression of Muslim faith. But the Hindu has been sorely tried. Mr. Azad has put on record a frustrating episode of Hindu tribulations. He had insisted on the inclusion of a Parsi in India's first Cabinet. India has often seemed to be the pleasant hunting ground of its minorities, Muslim, Christian and Parsi. The Hindu, who has nowhere else to go, has sometimes appeared to have been put out of the threshold. India has sometimes seemed to belong to everybody except its Hindu. In a deeper sense, this is also true. India's politicians have hitherto not cared to promote the interests of the really oppressed minorities of the country, the numberless backward castes among Hindu as well as Muslim. They have served the cause of the strong on the pretext of their being a minority, the Parsi, the Christian, the high castes among Muslims as also among Hindus.

When a Hindu is not cultivated in the sad lessons of history, a baffled rage overtakes him at the sight of his ancient sculpture and buildings. A number of these have been mutilated or put to the use of another faith. A more recent expression of vandalism has been the seizure of the best sites and landscapes for a privileged faith. While I have never been able to share the rage against the Muslim or Christian, I have also been unable

to sentimentalise over some of the institutions of their faith. I have been overcome with a sadness at the frequent impotence of our ancestors. We must also not forget that most Muslims are ex-Hindus. Should Hindu as well as Muslim share this sadness at much that has been the history of India, the evil out of which partition arose may yet be laid low.

For its inability to calculate the consequences of partition, India's leadership deserves no excuse, nor understanding. Those who stood at the centre of events could not possibly have dreaded the prospect of Hindu-Muslim riots so much as to espouse partition, the cause of much graver rioting. If the subjective reason of an old leadership would have stayed barren without the objective condition of Hindu-Muslim rioting, nor could the objective reason of Hindu-Muslim rioting have produced the bitter fruit of partition without its conjunction with the subjective reason of a decaying leadership. Repentance almost undoes an evil deed. The men whose souls should have been seared by the evil deed of partition are grovelling pleasurably in the dirt of their infamy. They would keep on descending to lower depths of conduct. If only they would repent of their past deed, they would cleanse themselves into a high and purposive state, and also add stature to their people. Let the people repent, not alone for their own failings, but also for the crimes of their leadership.

I was a man of no consequence. So were millions of others like me. We could not have changed the course of history in an immediate sense, but we might have borne witness to our protest against it. It is a matter of great sorrow to me today that not one man died or sat in jail, when this great land of ours was partitioned. I regret greatly that I did nothing to get into a jail at India's partition. The dread but false prospect of Hindu-Muslim rioting had so blinded me as to render me incapable of bearing witness to my faith at the most decisive moment of my life and the country's recent history. So were others blinded. But something worse happened to the leadership; it was tempted. The temptation continues. Many people believe that, without partition, India could not have achieved stability nor progress. The concepts of stability and progress deserve closer inspection in

order truly to ascertain the effects of partition. Meanwhile, no shadow of doubt need obscure the simple proposition that a decaying leadership operating in a riotous situation produced partition and that a purposive and more youthful people may have avoided the division of Hindustan into India and Pakistan.

III

The problem of India's partition is not being viewed without prejudice even at this distance of time. Twelve years have passed since India was partitioned, but, as after a dishonourable conspiracy, there is either silence or a concocted story. India without partition would have been worse off than India with partition, so goes the story. One can at best understand persons, without agreeing with them, who argue the inevitability of the partition. From inevitability to desirability is a very long step, but one most easily undertaken when rationalising an existing situation. India's partition has not only been inevitable, but has also become desirable, according to current political thinking. What is could not have been otherwise and should also be. Such dialectical thinking is not only peculiar to philosophers both materialist and idealist, but also to common men and their ordinary leaders. Man commonly wants an established routine and he is not usually desirous of a hero's life. He wishes to make a routine of any change, that he worked for or was forced on him. The population of India, even the uprooted millions, have already made a routine out of the partition, and they do not wish to be torn again out of their existing complex. Whatever appears most likely to cause an upset of the daily routine meets with the obstruction of this innate tendency in man to live an accustomed life. When the accustomed routine becomes heavily burdensome, then is the time for the mass of the people to think of a new path. It is the old story of a new way becoming the decayed rut via a pleasurable or at least an accustomed road.

To the masses, the partition of the country has become an accustomed, if not a pleasurable, routine. Much of the inevitability of any change, in a dialectical reasoning on political issues, derives from man's desire to become used to things. The people

have become used to partition. That is why they think that it was inevitable. If they thought more logically and factually and did not allow the prejudice of their existing situation to warp their argument, they would protest or at least be sad. To the common man's desire to become used to things is joined the ordinary leader's interest to justify and extol that for which he has been responsible. Thus, the inevitable easily becomes the desirable. A whole forest of vested interest and, therefore, an entire army of interested people, grows luxuriantly in any political situation that exists. This army justifies the situation out of which it has grown. It finds irremovable causes for its situation and, continuing the argument, discovers salutary effects to which the causes have led. The vested interest of a guilty leadership and the common man's desire to lead an accustomed life have combined to cover up the calamity of partition with the illusions of inevitability as well as desirability.

An argument runs to the effect that an unpartitioned India would not have been able to make progress owing to the mutually cancelling policies of its governmental leadership. This argument assumes that India of the current period has made progress and also that this progress is of a pattern with other like-situated nations. Neither assumption is correct. It is now well known that in the commonly accepted meaning of progress to connote increasing indices of production, other countries, both capitalist and communist and similarly situated, have taken very much longer strides. There should be another and a more real meaning of progress. Rhetorical use is often made in India of this meaning. No real effort is, however, made to take apart the different aspects of this meaning and to correlate the materialist with the idealist and to define their contours. The sentimental haze that surrounds all high topics in India of the current period is proof enough that the country after partition has become intellectually moribund, when not immersed in the gross vice of hypocrisy. Only a very great leadership and a people in a vastly heroic frame of mind could have saved the country from the moral decline that was bound to come out of the two most perverse events of all times, the death by violence of the unequalled statesman of non-violence and

the uprooting of tens of millions from the virtues and values of home.

Another assumption is made that an unpartitioned India would have fallen prey to conflicting policies, at the level of the government. The experience of the short-lived administration with Muslim League as well as Congress Party participation is adduced as proof. This administration tended to pursue mutually cancelling policies, the home ministry one and the finance ministry another and so forth. This led to overpowering frustration at the level of the leadership, which succeeded in communicating it to the people. To this day, a considerable number of persons would argue that they have done well in putting all such frustrating experience behind them and that future generations can build without having to carry this almost unbearable burden. Such an argument does not take into account the definitely unbearable burden that partition has imposed on the people on both sides of the frontier. This burden is both visible and concealed. Of the invisible burden, I shall say nothing. The stupendous decline in the character of the people, particularly of the leadership, from the days of the freedom fight must be traced to the largest single cause of partition. The visible burdens are too obvious to enumerate. Defence expenditure and Kashmir, uprooting of millions and rehabilitation expenditure and issues that create regular tension have plagued and weakened both sides of the frontier . The question naturally arises whether everything was done that could have prevented these calamities.

The answer is a definite no. The record for a definitive answer is overwhelming. The bit of evidence that just cannot crack and will stand the test of time was Mahatma Gandhi's unheeded suggestion that Mr. Jinnah and the Muslim League should take over the Indian Government by themselves. This suggestion was neither unpractical nor rhetorical. Defences against its possible deterioration into a stunt or a calamity had been built into it. The Muslim League Government, Gandhiji said, should be free to do whatever it liked in the interest of India as a whole. It would not have been free to act in the interest of a section of the population so as to hurt the rest. What

would have distinguished sectional interest from general interest was to have been left to the British Viceroy to decide. That such a scheme of adventurous exploration into national policy, as might have kept India united, if it had succeeded, and would not have done the country the slightest harm, if it had failed, was given no serious consideration is proof that Congress leadership was concerned with matters of less than national import.

A wholly League government might have made Mr. Jinnah and his Muslim leaguers less fanatical on the issue of partition and more receptive to the notion that the Congress party and the Hindus wanted to play fair with them. In the alternative, continuing intransigence on the part of the Muslim League in the face of Congress abnegation might have caused a deciding split among the Muslim masses. One cannot imagine a greater stroke of statecraft in a situation that was opening both ways—towards bliss or perdition. Why Mahatma Gandhi should not have tried to turn this suggestion into a policy genuinely meant to be executed is a question that would need a probe into his character that has not yet been made. I know of another suggestion, equally great, that might have retained the socialist element within the Congress party to the great advantage of the country. A list of such great suggestions may not be too short. Why did not Gandhiji insist on them at least to the point of reasonable propagation ? Did he make them merely to go on record as a wise man, a saint or as an impartial person ? Or was his conservative wisdom too strong for his adventurous policies ?

I have also felt that Gandhiji sometimes uttered large and pointlessly general words or schemes of generosity. The famous blank cheque to Muslims was one of them. There seemed always to be a lag between what the Muslim League asked for and what the Congress Party promised it, at the moment, so that the latest Congress promise was a big advance on one of the earlier League demands. If Gandhiji had really been generous to a concrete Jinnah demand, in the earlier stages, the subsequent history of India might have been different. I might venture to attempt a general assessment of Gandhiji's leadership as also

that of some other noted Congress men, in the context of India's fight for freedom and against partition.

Other Congress leaders are easy to understand. They paid no heed to Gandhiji's wish to let the Muslim League govern the country by itself, because they were far too eager to do the business of governing by themselves. In fact, they were shamelessly eager. They could have been somewhat more patient, to their own personal advantage. They might not have needed to be patient for too long a time. Mr. Jinnah would either have called them back to keep him company or they would have known how to make him go, if he acted too hurtfully. Congress leaders did not have at this time even that little patience, which is necessary for all selfish interests of a somewhat big size. Not only did they put their personal interest before the national interest, but they had also become incapable of striving for some big-size selfishness, if that meant sacrificing an immediate personal interest, however small-size.

More important than the question as to whether everything was done to prevent the partition of Hindustan is the question as to what is to be done now in order to repair the damage. The two questions are indeed somewhat interrelated. The past inevitability or otherwise of partition and its future continuance are somewhat linked together; one who wishes for the annulment of partition would be more inclined to doubt that it was inevitable. Such is the nature of human affairs that the best of scientific analysis, including evaluation of events that have already happened, is to some extent shaped by one's perspectives. Nevertheless, a distinction between a study of the past and the shaping of the future may often be made with profit. Some at least of those, who may consider partition to have been inevitable, are likely to be persuaded to the desire for its annulment. Before we consider possible courses of action that are now open to us, we may dwell a little further on the pettily selfish inadequacies of the Congress leadership. What the impersonal investigation of policies has disclosed to us is elaborately depicted by Mr. Azad through numerous disclosures of personal matters. This book leaves an overpowering impression that his colleagues were petty, spiteful, jealous, mean, little and less than men

in ordinary trades of life. His anecdotes are largely incorrect. He sees life through petty, spiteful, jealous and mean spectacles. May it not then be that what he has seen in others was largely in himself and that Congress leaders were not after all as small as he has made them out to be ? That might have been so, but the springs of action of these Congressmen were indeed exceedingly muddy. The Maulana has made innumerable mistakes in describing their individual actions, but he is largely right in outlining the contours of their little wills.

How could men so small have played such a large role in national affairs ? I have no explanation other than the theory of influence, of the miracle that the touch of a man of the centuries can perform upon men, who are otherwise less than ordinary. On the other hand, I am now somewhat suspicious of certain aspects of Gandhiji's philosophy or at least of some of his modes of action and organisation. These appear to have turned other men into heroes or extraordinary men of the flashy moment, but to have brought out the worst in them in the normal routines of life. How much does man need to keep a close watch on his inner life—not so close and unnatural that cleanliness turns into dirt, not so piecemeal that some portions receive all the light while the rest is infernally dark. That brings up the question of balance. Was there an evil core of imbalance in Gandhiji's modes of action ?

The Maulana has released the full steam of his spite on Sardar Patel. This was only natural. Sardar Patel was as undoubtedly Hindu in his political motivations, as Maulana Azad was Muslim. To these divergent outlooks was added the degrading conflicts of personal position and power. In all lands of the world, politics are vitiated by such personal conflicts. Nowhere else as in India are policies and decisions shaped by them. I hope that this is a result of our natural reawakening being yet in its infancy, and that it does not reflect the rotten greeds of old age from which our country must undoubtedly suffer up to a point. The conflict between Mr. Azad and Mr. Patel was a part of the usual pattern of relationships among their colleagues. Neither wanted the other to rise and either became vindictive when foiled by the other. The

Nariman, Bhulabhai and Bhabha stories are all there in the book. The Nariman story has been incorrectly told in so far as Mr. Nariman was the president alone of the Bombay city congress, while the chief ministership of Bombay province would have covered the far more populous areas of Maharashtra, Gujarat and parts of Karnatak. The Bhulabhai story has not yet been fully told, and it is in any event a part of Gandhiana, rather than of Sardar Patel's life. If there was injustice done to Bhulabhai and he had not overstepped the limits up to which he should compromise and adjust, Mahatma Gandhi must take the accusation. There was a razor's edge in Gandhiji's path between good and evil and I am not so certain that he did not on rare occasions sacrifice some of his men in order to restore his own balance.

The Bhabha story is basically correct. Nobody had ever heard of this Mr. Bhabha before he was appointed a minister in the Central Government, but Mr. Azad should have admired Mr. Patel for the skilled craftsmanship with which he turned a matter of personal disadvantage into one of gain. Mr. Azad wanted a Parsi in the Central Cabinet, also because of his private war upon Mr. Patel, who was skilled and unscrupulous enough to turn this seemingly lost point to his own advantage. Another man might have shied away from choosing an utterly ounknown business associate of his son to be a Cabinet minister. Mr. Patel could indeed be very personal, very unscrupulous and pettily vindictive against his opponents. Mr. Azad need not have related untrue stories to bring this point out. The meek docility and less than mediocrity of Gujarati Congressmen under Mr. Patel's leadership is conclusive proof. But the spite of Mr. Azad comes out not alone in the false embroideries to his tales, but also in his readiness to take under his wing anybody who happened to oppose Mr. Patel. I must point out the biggest lie told against Mr. Patel. Mahatma Gandhi did not confer the Congress presidency upon Mr. Patel, in fact, he had robbed him of it in the previous year. Mr. Patel had got more votes than Mr. Nehru for the presidency of the Lahore Congress, which passed the resolution on complete independence, but Gandhiji persuaded him to withdraw. Where Gandhiji persuaded and

where he forced, particularly in such matters of personal position and preferment, would be difficult to determine.

I cannot let go the Patel affair, before I have made a supplementary point. Mr. Patel was probably as petty, personal and vindictive as Mr. Azad or Mr. Nehru, but he was cut out of a much bigger cloth. His dimensions in the realm of statecraft were incomparably greater. Where his petty self was not involved, he could act with consummate skill and daring, as in the matter of the princely states. By itself, his action was probably not remarkable. He did not have anything of worth to contend with, the princes were so utterly degenerate. But, when I think of unregenerate Congress leadership minus Sardar Patel, I wonder whether Mr. Azad or Mr. Nehru could have done it. Mr. Patel stands out so incomparably tall because of the dwarfness of his colleagues, and not because his achievement was difficult or improbable. In ordinary times of average talent, such skill and daring as Mr. Patel showed would have received no special mention. But the past thirteen years of our life have been a nightmare of debasement and degeneracy.

Mr. Azad has also brought out a notable discrepancy in Mr. Rajendra Prasad's views. There should not have been much to say about changing outlooks of Mr. Rajendra Prasad, for the general run of politicians is not particularly noted for its consistency. But this particular discrepancy is more than inconsistency and it tells badly upon the character of the man. Mr. Rajendra Prasad took up a position of almost absolute non-violence and would have nothing to do with armies in the context of the last world war and possible deals with Britain. Later he took up a position of unmixed violence and wanted the Indian army to be divided between India and Pakistan without delay in the context of the partition. On issues which did not concern him except remotely and impersonally, he could be large-hearted, but he resumed his narrow and selfish sight on problems which were of immediate import to him. I would like to endorse Mr. Azad's point about this disintegration of the mind with a still more personal detail. Mr. Rajendra Prasad fought with Gandhiji against the British landlords and indigo planters of Champaran and for the right of farmers to the fruits of their toil

in what became the first engagement of civil disbedience on Indian soil. Twenty years later, he allowed his sons to acquire acres and acres of this lush soil of Champaran—not through normal purchase, but as the result of political patronage. The men of Gandhiji's faith have been able easily to divide their minds into the two worlds of the abstract and the concrete, a rigid set of lofty standards for the non-self and elastic or equivocal values for the self. They have also known how to keep the two minds distinctly apart and have not allowed the lofty vapourings of the one and the realistic outlooks of the other to interact.

Mr. Azad has something quite caustic to say about the Gandhians as distinct from the non-Gandhians in the Congress leadership, and he presumably has himself and Mr. Nehru in mind when he talks of the non-Gandhians. He dismisses the Gandhians as of no consequence. They took all their breath from their Master and had no life apart from him. How one wishes this were true. If Mr. Patel and Mr. Rajendra Prasad had really become the shadows of their Master, there would not have been the crass decline of national character nor partition. In another sense, Mr. Azad is right. These Gandhians were neither blind nor critical followers; they just leaned a little too heavily on their Master to be able to do without his crutches or not to betray him at the last public hour and in the numberless preceding private hours. But the non-Gandhians were a sorrier crowd. They seemed to have made a business out of the middle path, out of playing the non-partisan and mediating between two opposing factions of any time. Mr. Azad has dwelt on how he and Mr. Nehru were such non-partisans, ever anxious to conciliate, to restore goodwill and to get the whole army going. This gave them independence of outlook, so they thought. Up to a point, that may have been true. But that point was the salesman's, the broker's or the diplomatist's point. It was certainly not the point of creative statecraft. On every major issue, when these non-Gandhians differed from Gandhiji, at least in the later years, they were not only in the wrong, but also positively reactionary and obstructed national progress. The conciliators' business seems to have stifled their creative abilities, if they had originally any. Furthermore, this business

brought them great personal gain. Out of the business of conciliating between opposing factions, they could almost always extract high jobs like Congress presidentships of more than normal tenure for themselves. The conciliator should always be suspect, if he makes profit.

The only man whom Maulana Azad spares the accusation of being small-minded is Mr. Nehru and, up to a point, Mahatma Gandhi. Mr. Nehru, according to Mr. Azad, never acted out of spite or petty jealousy. When he went wrong, that was due to the influences around him. The Mountbatten influence has been recorded and so has been the Tandon influence in the matter of not keeping troth with Khaliquzzaman, which is of course a patent untruth. Mr. Nehru deserted Mr. Khaliquzzaman, because he obtained an absolute Congress majority. Mr. Azad has described Mr. Nehru as impulsive, generous, given to abstract reasoning and liable to go wrong under undesirable influences. This theory of scapegoats has been Mr. Nehru's most formidable single shield throughout his long public life. Someone has either stalled him from doing the right thing or another has talked him into doing a wrong one. Researchists may later discover the great fraud behind it and that a whole army of propagandists, in particular, Left busybodies, was always kept busy whispering the name of the latest obstructor or misleader of Mr. Nehru. I have often admired Mr. Nehru, the world's unmatched politician, as the practitioner of the great art of building up a fresh defence through an unending series of scapegoats. Before one defence cracks or is demolished, another more formidable goes up. Chetty, Bajpai, Deshmukh, Patel and Tandon and now Pant and Desai, every one by turn, all of them his minions, except Messrs. Patel and Tandon, but each one garbed as the evil contender or misleader of the moment, the story is there for any one to read. Mr. Azad has named no one in particular as the evil influence of a revealing story he has told. But the story, despite the manner in which it has been told, reveals a little too much—not alone of Mr. Nehru's petty spites and jealousies but also of his great craftiness.

Mr. Azad had one time achieved the remarkable feat of persuading the Punjab Unionist, some of whom were associated

with Mr Jinnah, into a coalition ministry with the Congress Party. To most people that appeared to be a remarkable achievement. Only they could have condemned it or remained indifferent to it, who took up the line of revolutionary purism or patient mass work. Mr. Nehru was surely not one of them. But the Maulana's achievement had brought him great glory. He records in his book how his crowds at wayside stations had grown enormously, how newspapers were putting him up as a great tactician and craftsman of politics and how Congressmen everywhere were pressing him to assert himself fully in the Congress Party. Mr. Azad states that Mr. Nehru opposed his Punjab achievement as contrary to Congress policy, but he hastens to add that Mr. Nehru did not do so out of petty jealousy. The theory of evil influences is again there. What exactly could these evil influences have talked Mr. Nehru into except to look upon Mr. Azad as a rival, who was making rapid strides ? But Mr. Azad does not say so. What he says is contrary to what he implies. He goes so far as to make damning assertion, that Mr. Nehru opposed him on every issue in the meeting of the Congress executive, that took place subsequent to his Punjab achievement. I do not know whether a stylistic sloppiness has marred this particular narration. As it stands, it can have only one meaning. Mr. Nehru's opposition to Mr. Azad would have been confined to the particular issue of the coalition ministry if he were acting in furtherance of a cause or theory. His opposition was general. That only a man consumed by petty jealousies could do. Within the fold of a single faith, an ideal makes a man oppose a specific act or speech of another person; spite makes him oppose the person and almost all that he says or does. After having made a full exhibition of petty spite and jealousy, which must indeed have been garbed as idealism, Mr. Nehru made a withdrawal apparently very gracefully. This took place because Mahatma Gandhi had put in a powerful plea on behalf of Mr. Azad. Mr. Nehru knew that the odds were heavy against him. He called on Mr. Azad the next morning and made his explanations. This is one of the great fortes of Mr. Nehru. He can appear so charming and generous. He also knows better than anyone else in the country how to promote

his personal interests and those of his relations and friends as well as how to pursue a foe to his ruin. He can command a finesse to obscure his greed and his vendetta that the others do not possess.

I must relate another of my personal experiences, although in its barest outline. I had asked Gandhiji, if he would be willing to conduct a meeting of representative Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs in riot-torn Delhi. The Congress Party of the city appeared to me to be the natural auspices for such a meeting. An office-bearer of the City Congress was at that time also a member of the Socialist Party, and he undertook to issue invitations. For two weeks and more, nothing happened. In disgust and worse, I told Gandhiji that no good could come out of the Congress Party any more and that the best of men must rot if he officered this party, and added idly that, if he so wished, I could have the meeting arranged under the auspices of the Socialist Party. Gandhiji somewhat surprised me by his reaction. He told me that the agency did not matter, so long as the work was good, and that he would go wherever I wanted him to go. Under the threat of the Socialist Party taking a lead over it, the City Congress Party assured me that it would act with despatch. What happened immediately prior to the meeting reads like a crime story. Microphone arrangements failed. Some leading dailies gave advance publicity to this small gathering of representatives as though it were a public meeting. Who did all this ? Was this done in order to humiliate me ? Or, were some men in authority in the Congress Party trying to foil the effort ? What surprised me most that, to pursue their bent and their interests, Gandhiji's disciples did not shrink from making their Master suffer and attend a meeting of a large number of persons for four long hours without a microphone he was then recovering from an illness. I ran to Gandhiji a few, although hours before the gathering with the woeful tale of the newspapers' publicity and how understanding he was and told me that all good work was in such manner obstructed.

A piquant situation developed, as this gathering met in a bigger neighbouring room because the Congress executive was scheduled to meet in Gandhiji's own room at the same hour.

I had warned Gandhiji of this, but he might also have wanted to play the imp, though not necessarily in my fashion, to the Congress executive. I was naturally and vastly delighted at having been able to cock such a big snook at that silly and pompous body. Members of that august body were regaled with soft drinks at Gandhiji's behest and ordered to do their business without him. But they had apparently no business outside of him and, after making vain efforts to wheedle Gandhiji into their midst, they departed one by one after waiting an hour or more. Before going away, Mr. Patel and Mr. Azad came to my meeting, sat for half an hour or so near Gandhiji, but spoke not a word. Mr. Nehru alone sat in the meeting right up to the end. He took a rear seat and spoke not a word. The meeting was inconclusive. It took no decisions, because there was no specific agreement. At an early stage of the meeting, I asked Gandhiji if a resolution should be drafted. He asked me not to worry, for a resolution did not take more than a few minutes to write, and what mattered was the trend of the discussion.

That such a gathering, although inconclusive, took place in riot-torn Delhi was itself a great achievement. When all was over, two of us alone were left in the room and we walked towards each other. The prime minister told me that I was learning to become crafty. To this day, I do not understand what on earth he could have meant. He must have seen the disgust or anger on my face and, disregarding my vehement question as to what he meant, he put his arm round me in that gesture of affection, which I wish I could also command whenever there was need for it, and desired to reach me wherever I wanted. I reached him to the door and bowed myself away. I have never in all my life known how to promote my personal interests. Nor do I wish ever to know. I may sometimes have acted out of spontaneous impulses of anger, joy or disgust and also out of contempt or mischief or the pure delight of being able to assert myself and put the other fellow in his place. There is no greater delight than to put a crafty prime minister in his place. Outside of doing my duty in that riot-torn city and at the behest of Gandhiji, I may also have been motivated

by the impish desire to get square with these bloated ministers and leaders. But I was pursuing no personal interest. I was merely seeking communal peace. But the prime minister beheld some craftiness in me, for I had managed to bring off something which he himself had not been able to do. He could only see the world in his own image. But who knows if his jealous suspicions might not have become right under a different turn of events. If Gandhiji had lived for a few more years, I might also have incidentally obtained the satisfaction of what to some would have appeared as my personal interests.

Maulana Azad has brushed Gandhiji a little, while pointing out the spiritual lack of his contemporaries. He has probed into Gandhiji's habit of running after Mr. Jinnah and to cajole him through praise. I cannot say that Mr. Azad has no case at all. He is, of course, politically rattled. He was the great Muslim and not Mr. Jinnah. Furthermore, Gandhiji had always picked out someone else to head the nationalist Muslims; at one time it was the Ali Brothers and then it was Doctor Ansari. Mr. Azad was a man of logic; Gandhiji needed men of emotion. That, however, is a quarrel which we might leave to Gandhiji and the Maulana. I understand that the thirty unpublished pages of Mr. Azad's memoirs relate largely to this quarrel and the Maulana's accusation that Gandhiji suffered from some spiritual lack which made him run after Mr. Jinnah. Has the Maulana hinted that as Gandhiji was unjust to the Muslims, he tried to be generous to Mr. Jinnah ? Or, has he tried to relate Gandhiji's attitude towards Mr. Jinnah to his inner life. All such efforts, if they have been made, are vain. What may be correct is Mahatma Gandhi's tendency to effusion, to overdo and oversay things in certain situations. He appeared to cajole and wheedle at such times. He probably did so because he wanted his leadership to be a light burden on his people, and also because he thought that the people were fickle minded and easily scared and could not yet take it. I can say from hindsight that such effusiveness either with the British or the Muslim League or any other opponents was bound to lead lesser men to duplicity and falsity of character.

The Maulana inflicts his meanest cut on Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan. I doubt the biscuit story. Even if some Pathans told the Maulana that the Khan Brothers ate biscuits themselves and gave them none, that was a patent lie. The Frontier Gandhi could not have been present on such occasions if they at all happened. If he had been, he must have seen to it that his guests got what they needed and what he could give. I have been unable to understand the repeated and patently baseless harshness of Maulana Azad towards Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, the only true and great man among Gandhiji's apostles. Mr. Azad has also had occasion to talk of the Khan brothers' waning influence, as though the other Congress leaders had any influence of their own outside that of Mahatma Gandhi. The only legitimate criticism that Maluana Azad makes against the Khan brothers is the inclusion of several of their relations into the ministry and the administrative set-up of the frontier. The Frontier Gandhi is believed to have objected to it. That was not enough. He should have put his foot down. Do men like Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan bow to injustice? But it will be some time before the men of Asia, even the greatest among them, learn not to let their families, relations and friends profit from their political successes. As to the harsh treatment received by Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan at the hands of Mr. Azad and his other colleagues, this may well be their way of reminding themselves that they committed no evil deed in agreeing to partition.

IV

The division of India cannot be easily undone. Too many divergent policies and too many conflicting interests are being continually created to permit a reunification of the two states. And yet the problem of reunion is not as impossible as it appears on the surface. After all, the two states can continue to exist as separate entities only if they are able to achieve some understanding and goodwill between themselves. The last thirteen years of continual tension should not be regarded as part of normal existence. Even this tension was interrupted on four or five occasions of approaching friendship. If the state of tension has nevertheless lasted this considerable time, that is primarily because most of the time it has been a quiescent tension and also because neither of the two states has yet begun to acquire strength. Both the states or perhaps one of them will assuredly begin to acquire strength some day. Then it can no longer be a quiescent tension. It must either become an active and calamitous tension or resolve into an equally active and destiny-laden friendship. The point is that friendship between the two states can only be an intermediate stage, an interregnum for a more enduring stage. I wish to advance the theory that friendship between India and Pakistan is an essential condition for their continuing existence, and also that such friendship cannot be commanded to stay within its prescribed limits and must necessarily advance into reunion. It is not considered proper form on either side at the present time to talk of reunion. But talk of friendship is occasionally permitted and is even considered the correct thing on certain ceremonial occasions or among some sentimental circles. Such effusions of friendship are however a part of quiescent tension and have nothing whatever to do with a genuinely friendly state. To achieve a continuation of friendship or to talk

of it in a meaningful way, a bold, realistic and long view,must be taken and an unflinching analysis of the Indo-Pakistan problem must be made. It is not necessary that all those who become engaged in one or another act of friendship should make this analysis or subscribe to it. But those who lay down the policies or are pioneers in promoting them must possess an all-round view.

Some may accuse me of having written a little too frankly or fully. They might charge me with imprudence. If I believe friendship to be so definitely a stepping stone to reunion they might ask me what interest I serve by disclosing an aim, which is later to come as an automatic consequence but which at present arouses animosity. The answer is simple The disclosure of the aim gives me an all-round view, as it would to anybody who is filled with it. Such an all-round view will not mistake effusions of friendship with the real stuff, nor will it be broken hearted at such types of tension as eventually bring the peoples together, although they may in the process drive the governments further apart. He is, above all, always prepared to see that the other fellow has a case, and perhaps a very good one, though not necessarily in the sense in which the latter upholds it. The people of Pakistan appear to me to have a very good case against Hindus and India. As a logical extension of the argument, the people of India have a similarly good case against Muslims and Pakistan. This, however, has nothing to do with the rhetoric that passes between the two governments and their newspapers. In fact I deny that the governments of India and Pakistan have any case at all most of the time. Such a view must therefore be a long view in the nature of things and must voluntarily give up all ambition to produce an immediate impact on reality. It must also be exceedingly generous as well as firm, it must adventurously explore and it must on occasions be willing to give up its apparent interest until that seems to hurt.

Indo-Pakistani relationships have shrunk to such small proportions at the moment, that one is likely to make a mistake about their possibilities. A first mistake would be to think that such relationships as may exist between India and Pakistan, whether friendly or hostile, would be restricted to governmental level. It is true that a modern state, whether totalitarian or formally democratic,

can impose an iron curtain on travel, trade, opinion, news and other relationships against another state with which it is unfriendly. In such a situation, government-to-government relationship is all that can exist between these two states. Most of the time, this will be a hostile relationship, when it is not quiescently tense. The peoples of the two states will be only too willing to swallow such scraps of news and opinions as their governments dole out to them. This will keep the tension alive, which will enable the two states to keep the government-to-government relationship to such restricted levels of hostility, indifference and occasional relief as they like. And, yet, the heaviest iron curtain has been proved to possess holes and invisible passages. Events in Russia and Hungary have demonstrated that, in a long-range sense and for the purposes of internationl relationships, the government and the people need not be treated as synonymous.

A particular type of people-to-people relationship has continued to exist between India and Pakistan. It has also caused much unnecessary worry concerning the loyalty of certain sections of the population. In a basic sense, the Hindus of Pakistan are at least as loyal to India as they are to their own state. The Muslims of India are similarly at least as loyal to Pakistan as they are to their own state. This basic sentiment of restricted friendship has endured despite all fluctuations of state relationships. It is true that such restricted friendship with special sections of the population, both in India and Pakistan, has tended to narrow or destroy other types of people-to-people relationships. Nevertheless, these have existed more than is known to publicists and police in either country. They have not been nurtured with regular meetings or contacts. They have existed largely in the mind. In a more favourable situation, they might easily blossom forth into wider friendship. Additionally, as scepticism concerning news and governments grows on either side of the frontier, the peoples will be more favourably disposed towards each other. In addition to undirected holes and passages through the iron curtain, some directed channels might also be dug.

These two types of government-to-government and people-to-people relationships do not exhaust the entire area of Indo-Pakistan neighbourliness. A third possibility of special or

regional solutions exists. Such solutions may be possible in respect of all neighbouring states. They are eminently possible as between India and Pakistan. Such solutions may relate to the problems of Kashmir or Bengal and the like. They may not be immediately practical solutions. They may not meet with the approval of governments. They might even incur the displeasure of vocal sections on either side. If, however, there is the practicability and potentiality of the people's will behind them, although that may take long to mature, these special solutions can be of extraordinary value. Government-to-government and people-to-people relationships and special or regional solutions are the three categories of the entire area of Indo-Pakistan neighbourlines. These categories may not always fit into one another. Some of them may even appear to cancel the rest. But to one who has known the infamy of India's partition, the shame that climaxed into it and has continued to flow out of it, a comprehensive, long-range and all-round view can alone give satisfaction.

Not much need be said about government-to-government relationship. It might appear fantastic today to talk of one or another type of confederal relationship. But the possibility must always be kept in mind and no harm will, therefore, be done in debating its theoretical types. Without the adventure of exciting new ideas, which temporarily or seemingly give much and take little, as was Gandhiji's idea of an all-Muslim League government, this debate would be pale. To begin with, such ideological adventure may be easier in India than in Pakistan, but the infection may catch. It is true that no confederal scheme, whether joint sessions of parliaments, statutory provisions of the president and the prime minister being of different religious professions, joint defence control, united currency and no customs or other restrictions can be more than a halting-house. The scheme must either advance into greater intimacy, or suffer a jolt and further exacerbation of tempers. Aside from confederal schemes, a whole lot of individual problems like canal waters, refugees, trade and passport regulations, education and news and general cultural exchange need to be solved by appropriate pacts and agreements. Any one problem may at the moment become the

background for all other problems, for instance, Kashmir just at present. Almost all of government-to-government relationship may come to hang on it. We may briefly consider the Kashmir question in connexion with special or regional problems.

A complication arises because of the world context of the government-to-government relationships between India and Pakistan. The Soviet and the Atlantic camps may up to a point determine or regulate these relationships. They have also their native agencies for purposes of mass propaganda. The Soviets have their communists in India as well as in Pakistan. The agencies of the Atlantic camp are a little less obvious like committees of cultural freedom or free enterprise or Hungary and Tibet, but they are ever crouched to make their propagandist pounce for a pro-Atlantic Indo-Pakistan understanding. While there is need to be wary of the full implications of any such propagandist moves of Indo-Pakistan relationship, one need not adopt a touch-me-not attitude towards them. In the ultimate instance, however, a truly independent outlook of the Third Camp, as distinct from the jackal-like dependence of Pakistan on the Atlantic camp as from the fox-like alternation of India between the two camps, can alone provide the world framework for an Indo-Pakistan understanding.

People-to-people relationships will thrive only after the people on both sides of the frontier learn to be a little suspicious of the news and opinions to which they are subjected by their governments. How can I ever forget that the prime minister of India made more speeches on Kashmir during the general election of 1957 than in his entire lifetime. That must be true of the opposite number in Pakistan of that time. I was recently in the neighbourhood of the Sind-Rajasthan border between India and Pakistan. I have always been sceptical of news of frontier clashes. What I saw of this border confirmed me in my scepticism. I shall never forget Asu-ka-tala, a watering camp, alive during the day and dead at night. I had earlier seen agricultural societies of two thousand years ago continuing unchanged. What I saw here was a pastoral society of three or four thousand years ago in

deep frieze. There may be much to tell of the people in this area, but the frontier here is dead from the view-point of a war. Other borders between India and Pakistan may not be as dead. But the skirmishes that are reported on either side, with changed colouring, of course, are not worthy of the excitement they cause. What should have excited the people, at least in India, is the total absence of competitive co-existence around the borders. Life in Rajasthan should have been so improved that the people of Sind could have been tempted or, alternatively, life in Sind should have been so improved that the people of Rajasthan were tempted.

Excitement around passing incidents, as for instance the shooting down of the Canberra aircraft, is not warranted by the fact of such events or their sequel. There is no special reason for Pakistan to be proud of this exploit or to lionise the airmen who did the shooting. It was an affair more of spying and intelligence than of daring and skill in the air. The Indian airmen were, so to say, stabbed in the back and had no chance to fight back. They should have been warned. If it is the Pakistan government's claim that such warnings have had no effect in the past, then it should have made a public declaration that poaching Indian airmen would be liable to be shot. On the other hand, the story of the India government is not quite convincing. With the declared speed and altitude of the Canberra aircraft, the Pakistan pursuers could not have shot it, unless they had advance information and were flying in wait for it. Everybody knows how ebullient airmen can sometimes be and, more out of playful mischief than for strategic purposes, they fly on each other's territory and take photographs. Pakistan airmen do it in the same way as Indian airmen. Pakistan has not done well in punishing an occasional and playful mischief with such dire consequence and in such a dirty way. At the same time this should be no occasion for the India government to tell lies and magnify the Pakistan crime. The oxygen bottles of the parachuting Indian airmen did not more likely open than that they were assaulted and beaten up by Pakistani interrogators. Rumour is afloat that a Muslim bearer of one of the Indian airmen, who had bragged of his scheduled ebullience, is under

arrest. The fellow is perhaps innocent and the guilty man may well be a Hindu in the higher echelons. In any event, why should Asians, in particular Indians, ape the drinking habits of Europeans of colder climes, if for no other reason than that they begin to brag.

After the people on both sides of the frontier have begun to develop a somewhat doubting attitude towards exciting news, they will be able to devise several types of relationships. The people-to-people relationship that really matters and decides the rest is the ideological bond, occasionally also the open or organisational affiliation that exists among political parties of the same faith no matter what their country. The Communists of India and Pakistan have up to a point exhibited this bond, although the current strain on the Pakistani Communists is so heavy as to cause their virtual or apparent extinction. Organised Socialism has hitherto been too flimsy and vaporous a doctrine for such a situation. The most deciding political bonds, therefore, have so far been those based on ancient ties of common struggle or on foreign policies of some kind of non-alignment. These bonds may have existed alone in the mind, but they are not therefore of little value. I do not, of course, deny the importance of people's relationships that may develop through poetry or sport, in the sphere of chambers of commerce or of societies for education and the fine arts and, above all, through travel and meetings. But the deciding relationship shall be that of men belonging to the same political faith on either side of the frontier. As far as I can see, the existing political faiths are unequal to the task. They are built on the desire for imitative modernisation, which must necessarily be sectional and they must therefore divide and separate rather than identify. This estrangement, this loss of identification, is at the root of the disease, internally in India as well as in Pakistan, among different sections of the people, and externally between the two populations. A new faith of egalitarian modernisation may perhaps serve.

Of special or regional solutions, illustrative mention may be made of the concept of united and sovereign Bengal. When Mr. Sarat Chandra Bose had first dropped this suggestion, I had

considered it an extraordinarily foolish idea. It was probably so, then. It may still take a long time to become a practical idea. But I would not today be prepared to refuse to consider the idea. The population of East Bengal may be tempted to break away from West Pakistan only if West Bengal is similarly tempted to break away from India. Such a breaking away may well prove to be an intermediate stage towards an eventual and larger reunion. The post-freedom governments of India as well as Pakistanhave demonstrated the folly of an irrational sentimentality concerning the physical lines of the frontier. What matters is the content that grows within these borders. One should also be prepared to consider and to debate such solutions for Kashmir as joint control, or piecemeal plebiscite, or juridical acceptance of the existing situation, or a sovereign Kashmir, or integration of Kashmir with Pakistan in exchange for integration of East Bengal with India. A united and sovereign Bengal should also be considered. One should also not shut one's ears to the voice of freedom that comes from the Pathan area, the voice of Pakhtoonistan.

It may be suggested that these various people-to-people and government-to-government relationships and the manifold special solutions are mutually cancellatory. The demand for Pakhtoonistan or united Bengal may so antagonise the government of Pakistan as to make nonsense of any relationships or confederal solutions between India and Pakistan. That is indeed so. The demand for sovereign Kashmir or its transfer to Pakistan may similarly antagonise the government of India. The point is not which government or which section of a population any particular solution may antagonise; the point is how far it seeks to identify Hindus and Muslims in an ultimate sense, and also to achieve reunion of the partitioned land. A theorist or a prophet alone will comprehensively espouse all the solutions at the same time. In the actual arena of political battle, different groups and spokesmen will have to espouse one or the other solution. These groups may clash, heatedly, with one another. If I were effectively working for a confederal solution at any time, I would be angry with the interference that the voice of Pakhtoonistan might cause. But if I did not lose sight

of the total picture, my anger would be moderated by the kindred elements of either solution. For what matters is the reunification of Hindustan, everlasting peace, and identification of Hindus and Muslims of this land. Everyone should be prepared to adjust and compromise to the fullest degree possible in matters of electoral or parliamentary representation or of government services in order that Hindustan may again become one, that landlords and capitalists and higher castes and educational feudalism may go, that the people may produce plentily and obtain their goods at a fair price and above all that identification should be achieved between the masses and the middle classes, the people and their leaders.

V

At the bottom of all of India's ills is the almost complete loss of identification between the rulers and the ruled, the middle class and the mass. This absence of identification has been over the centuries documented as total divorce in the shape of castes. The right word to use is not divorce but a state of total unrelatedness. India's masses have been totally unrelated to her ruling classes, the vast sea of the mass to the tiny ruling minority among the high caste. Mahatma Gandhi did not create this situation. He was heir to it. It was something which several thousand years of Indian history had given him. It is something nobody can escape. It is, I believe, the prime causation of much that has happened in recent years in our country, certainly of its partition. This is not to say that events in India are iron-bound by this penomenon and that they must take place precisely in the way they do.

The absence of identification between the rulers among high castes and the vast masses is the most important, the most stubborn and the most deciding single factor of the current Indian situation. Its consequences are highly uncertain. These will depend on whether it is submitted to or overcome, or partly submitted to or partly overcome, and a hundred different combinations of the process. But the factor must produce consequences one away or the other, or in a hundred different ways.

Did Mahatma Gandhi succeed in overcoming, or even seek fully to overcome, this state of total unrelatedness between India's mass and their rulers ? On the surface, it would appear that he did. He swung numberless masses of men and women into action as few other men have done in the country's history. But there was something wrong somewhere with the activising;

it appeared to be much more universal than it actually was. A great error of observation of happenings in India arises because of her teeming millions. An activity, though not spread over the people as a whole, but which has moved some numerically important sections, would appear to be more universal than it actually was.

A statistical evaluation of India's freedom struggle, both those who took active part by going to jail or making contributions or suffering in whatever small way and those who took passive part by attending meetings or receptions, would disclose two disturbing factors. The active participants belonged in their majority to the high caste. The passive participants also belonged in their majority to the high castes, except on those very rare occasions, when some segments of the backward castes were swung into a movement of the instant. This was an inescapable weakness of the Indian situation, like a curse that followed Gandhiji and the entire freedom struggle. This was what caused partition in the first instance. This is what has caused the march backwards of the Indian revolution, a text-book illustration of revolution's betrayal such as never happened before in human history; a revolution in reverse, about which I may have to say something later.

It would be wrong to imagine that Gandhiji had swung the entire people into action. Over and over again one scene comes to my mind. I had gone to a public meeting of some passion, and the local enthusiasts made me walk some distance in a somewhat warm procession. I noticed a little dog in the crowd. There was something human in its eyes, a curiosity and desire to participate socially. It ran with the rest, got entangled with their feet but appeared determined not to be left out of the life of the community. As far as I can recollect, this little dog sat in the front row of my listeners more than half way through my speech. Such participants are very few and they do not stay long. It would be ridiculous to treat the parallel as anything more than a graphic impression.

Before I proceed further with this enquiry, I must first put out of the way the notion that absence of identification between the rulers and ruled is a universal phenomenon, and that there

is nothing unique or specifically Indian about it. It is true that identification between the rulers and the ruled is nowhere complete. It is also true that it is nowhere so incomplete and so absent as in India. Some people try to make out that there is nothing specifically Indian about India's castes. This is a totally wrong and dangerous endeavour. Disraeli and similar other Europeans have written of the two nations of the rich and the poor in all the world, also among the whites of Europe. The phenomenon of separation between Europe's working classes and middle classes and different gradations among them has also been noticeable. It would be stupid not to recognise the contrary phenomena of Europe's society.

Long before Disraeli wrote, an English Duchess was offering a kiss for every vote cast for her favourite Fox. She kissed butchers, scavengers and all others, whoever was prepared to vote for her favourite. Such an event, which is a perfect embodiment of social equality, never happened in India's history, at least not publicly, and that is what matters. Other events, perhaps of an equal value to mankind, have taken place. I have no intention to run down my own country or its history. There are few Indians who have loved their country or its history as much as I have done. True love must know what is there, and know it sharply as distinct from what is not. Mahadevi of the Lingayat sect was among the greatest women that ever lived on this earth. She discarded her robes and roamed unclothed all over the country, in fulfilment of the concept of woman's equality with man and her equal worth and oneness in the sight of god or whatever was her abstraction. This was the greatest gesture that woman has ever made of her equal worth with man. But this was an individualist gesture; there was little of collective value in it and, anyway, it did not directly touch the lives of other men and women. I have remarked elsewhere that India is the land par excellence of spiritual equality, of which Mahadevi is a grand example, and Europe is the unmatched region of social equality, of which the British Duchess is no less grand a symbol.

Gandhiji does not seem to have been aware of the full implications of the caste system right up to a few years before

his death. He started with some kind of a romantic idealisation of it. He tried to shear it of its evils, as though the thing was not evil in itself. It was only some time around the last great struggle for freedom, the open rebellion of 1942, that he recognised the inherent evil of the caste system. It is true that he had all along tried to remove untouchability. That was a reformer's act, not a revolutionary's. He had for a long time wanted to maintain the caste system, but to reform it of its dross. He changed his position only a few years before his death, when he became a revolutionary also in respect of caste. It was too late then. The weakness of his earlier position had already caused a basic anaemia in the nationalist movement.

Gandhiji could be pathetic in his varying interpretations. His non-violence could at one time lead him to total obstruction to the British war effort and at another to conditional co-operation with it. His traducers have seen in such changes of front *a reflection of the varying situations; in a situation of* some strength of the nationalist movement and increasing weakness of British imperalism he could be somewhat firm in interpretations of truth and non-violence. Aside from this moral judgment, which accuses Gandhiji of hypocrisy and which I do not accept, there is enough evidence of his changing opinions. The single item that has struck me most was the contrast in the tone and substance of his letters to the British viceroy on the eve of the open rebellion and six months after its outbreak. While we were in the midst of the struggle as partisans, we did not notice this contrast. But, as I re-read them in their continuity some years ago, I was somewhat sad, and also offended. The first letter was the letter of a leader confident of his people and his steps. The second was the letter of a whining woman who had been whipped into submission by her man. It is easy enough on this evidence to accuse Gandhiji of hypocrisy and a double mind. The matter goes deeper than that.

Gandhiji was the leader of a somewhat wobbly army of officers, on whom he had foisted a programme of a steady, though not high-pitched, tenacity and suffering. He had to keep his officers at least in such trim that they did not scatter or melt away. His weakness, as also that of the nationalist

movement, derives from this situation of morale. This situation of the fighting army and its morale, at least that of its leadership, derived from the age-old attitudes and habits of caste. Gandhiji presumably thought that he could overcome such a situation in one way alone. He had to deck every defeat in plausible raiments of victory. He had also to reduce the rigours of defeat to the barest minimum. After every defeat he had to save his army and its morale, and to secure to it as early as possible a condition of comfort or at least absence of willed suffering. One might suggest that commanders of violent warfare also do that. The parallel does not really hold. Commanders of war do not always give battle, they retire or run away or regroup and fall upon the opponent from behind, and engage in similar other practices. A surrender, conditional or otherwise, of a warring army is entirely there in the open and cannot be mistaken for victory.

Two questions arise. Did Gandhiji have to restore conditions of normalcy after every defeat as soon as possible ? Did he have to use accidental sophistries of non-violence in order to mix up the reality of defeat with a partial feeling of victory ? The two questions, though interrelated, are different. I have no hesitation in answering the second question in the negative. Gandhiji should have kept considerations of political expediency apart from theoretical enunciations of policy and principle. He should have been willing to confess, at least partly, when his army was licked or was unable to reach its objective. He could easily have done it. After all such movements, when he had to suffer defeat, he could point to the increasing fearlessness of his people in the midst of temporary failure to reach the objective. I do not think that the movement or its non-violence would have weakened because of such a strategy. This strategy might indeed have given him added strength.

The first question, with regard to restoration of normalcy, is a little bit more difficult to answer. The system of castes has given to the Indian character certain extraordinary virtues and vices. The virtues are obvious. The Indian character, moulded as it is by the caste system, does not easily take to change, which it inspects over and over again before acceptance

and, more often than not, which it strangles by a surface acquiescence and a basic rejection. In times of prosperity and strength, such a character strives for an odd kind of justice and, at all times, for stability and maintenance of identity. The vices are much more numerous and deep going. Indian character has become the most split in all the world. The total loss of identification between higher and lower castes has produced a situation of great unreality, of lying and double-dealing, of tensions that have become a normal part of the mind, of readiness to whine and wheedle and cajole at the moment immediately before or after threatening, bullying or assaulting, of great bravery without tenacity and cowardice without total submission, of a ruling class unparalleled in all the world for its duration or its ability to adjust, alongside of its stubbornness to maintain its identity. Gandhiji did nothing to change this character or, at least, nothing with a deliberate purpose and not over any considerable period. He had therefore to retrieve his defeats with the greatest possible speed. I do not believe that any other way was open to him in this respect. He might, at the most, have changed with benefit his tactics or the manner in which he retrieved his defeats.

It is often said that India's susceptibility to invasions and her frequent submission to them has been the result of situations of disunity. Even if we assume that such disunities have from time to time affected the people, the question arises, as to why the Indian people have, more than any other, been subject to them. Actually, however, that is not the issue at all. The people have not figured in India's wars, or at best only secondarily. Just as Europe has to day evolved a state of total war, the Indian people in their history succeeded in evolving a state of almost total warlessness. These concepts are comparative and must not be exaggerated to fill the entire picture. The picture of the Indian peasant ploughing his fields in the midst of and before and after wars that changed his kingdom is perennial. It is not true in the same measure of the rest of the world.

The Indian people gave the job of governing and of fighting wars and thinking about such matters or providing for them to certain selected castes. The mass of the people had nothing

whatever to do with this business. Long disuse of a limb atrophies it. The system of caste has atrophied the Indian people for political purposes. When people talk of disunity as the prime factor behind India's submissiveness to foreign invasions, they do so because of their ruling class or high caste angle. Disunity among whom ? Obviously among the ruling classes. Disunity among the people in terms of India's history means precious little, for the people were not politically active. Again, this disunity among ruling castes would not have caused the damage it did, if the mass of the people had not been afflicted by the curse of caste into a non-political existence. Not disunity, but caste has been the prime factor behind India's susceptibility to invasions and her frequent submission to them.

The system of leaving government and politics to selected castes, and the loss of identification or a state of unrelatedness between the middle class and the masses were bound to cause a weakness in the freedom movement. It could only rarely stand up to the British Government in its full stature. Its leader behaved in such fashion that he appeared to blow hot and cold at the same time. Such debility right at the source of the freedom struggle was bound to bring misfortune. Actually, it brought the disaster of partition. That should not at all surprise one. After all, what is partition ? India's partition was some kind of a legal registration of a state of unrelatedness among her castes, the middle class and the masses. It was this unrelatedness that, in the first instance, enabled small bands of Muslim conquerors to overwhelm the Hindu masses. The same unrelatedness later caused the succumbing of the Pathan Muslim to the Turk Muslim and so forth. It has currently borne the bitter fruit of the country's partition.

If India's freedom struggle had right from the start, and as a determining measure, based itself on the grant of preferential rights and opportunities to backward castes with a view to abolition of the caste system, the Hindu, Sudra and Harijan, would have mingled with the Muslim, Ansar and Momin, or they would at least have combined politically to secure freedom for a united country. This strategy and policy measure was later tried as a propagandist and rhetorical offensive among Muslim back-

ward castes. Its failure was, therefore, a foregone conclusion. The best argument in the service of Muslim fanaticism, which ultimately aimed at and achieved partition, was supplied by the Hindu system of castes. That argument needed no elaborate proof. It was there for all to see. It went straight home and lodged there for ever. To this day, an Indian village is nothing more than an assemblage of various areas partitioned according to caste. It is somewhat idle to ask whether Gandhiji or anybody else could have changed this situation. A look-back at history can at best analyse and enumerate alternatives, but *it can in no way ascertain* whether these alternatives were possible at that time. Such an analysis and speculation may at best broaden the mind, which is what goes into the future and is not part of the past.

Sugary sentimentalism is part of the Indian character. This weakness also derives presumably from the absence of identification between the ruling class and the masses. What is not obtainable through strength is sought to be achieved by prayer and wheedling and praise and hyperbole. The otherwise rich languages of India, than whom no language of the world is richer in a total way, suffer from this grievous malady of hyperbole and a sugared sentimentality. Everything is turned into sacral shape. All becomes holy. Everything is turned into nectar. Everybody is an ocean of something or the other, of learning or generosity, of wisdom or courage. Words thus lose their meaning. I suspect that Gandhiji and the freedom movement were victims of this general national disease, although he appeared to be the master of an art rather than the victim of a disease. His "dear friend" to all British tyrants is a case in point. And the Quaide Azam to which Mr. Azad has drawn attention is another. I share Mr. Azad's distaste at Gandhiji running after Mr. Jinnah. But I am unable not to recognise that Gandhiji occasionally pursued Mr. Jinnah, precisely because nationalist Muslims were a lazy lot and their leader was a prince among such politicians as are heroes of the speech and of manoeuvre. Nevertheless, Gandhiji was a little too prone to seek to achieve his ends with flattery, which he misled all the world and perhaps also himself to mistake for polite friendliness.

The friendly politeness of the struggle for freedom has so far prevented its proper evaluation. It is assumed that this struggle was less costly than a violent fight, or that it did not leave behind such bitterness and disorder which a violent revolution would have occasioned or that it made continuity of ideals and habits easier. All these assumptions need to be closely inspected. Some of them are patently wrong. I must again and again emphasise the terrible and unparalleled cost of partition as part of the total expenditure of our freedom struggle. I should like to advance an additional point and also to puncture yet another assumption that a violent revolution against the British empire in India would not have succeeded, while the non-violent struggle did. Let us try to construct, in such detail as our imagination allows us, the architecture of the freedom fight, if Gandhiji were not born or had not operated.

The Indian struggle had, by the outbreak of the first world war, reached a two-pronged stage of fairly experienced constitutionalism, as well as a pretty sharp terrorism. A certain amount of specialisation was also beginning to take shape. The cleverer people were going in for constitutionalism, the braver people for terrorism. I suspect that there was a deep understanding, something like an unspoken and an unwritten contract, between these two wings of patriots, until Gandhiji introduced such principles as caused antagonism between them. The constitutionalists and the terrorists would, with time, have gone on intensifying their campaigns; more and more people would have been drawn into the scope of their activities. A certain pattern of alternation would have left the field free to the constitutionalists for a decade or so, during which time they would have tried to infect the entire people, through their speeches and other parliamentary manoeuvres with a desire for freedom. A state would then be reached when the blocking of this desire would have become intolerable. At this stage, the terrorists would arrive on the scene and operate for a year or two. With each such alternation the constitutionalists would have gained in experience and skill and mass following, and the terrorists would also have been able to evolve forms of action towards organised

and mass violence, during which assassination would have played no role other than that of vengeance or sparking a conflict.

I do not see why constitutionalists and revolutionaries should not have continued their respect for each other, even though the former might have from time to time uttered words of disapproval against the latter. There is again no reason to believe that this team would have needed more than three alternations to achieve its objective; it would certainly not have needed to go beyond the second world war. In fact, it might have needed less time to achieve success than Mahatma Gandhi's non-violence.

Another great change of far-reaching and revolutionary implications in the whole situation would have shown itself. I now bring into the picture the personality of Mr. Jinnah, not only because he was the architect of Pakistan, but also because he was a model among India's constitutional patriots before Gandhiji came on the scene. A very large section of Muslim League communalists was, perhaps, precisely such patriots as did not wish to go beyond constitutionalism, and therefore felt blocked by Gandhiji. The leader of India's freedom fight did not permit a separation of cleverness and bravery, of reason and strength. He wanted the two to be combined in the same person. This was not relished by persons like Mr. Jinnah. It is, indeed, doubtful if Gandhiji achieved an enduring success even with those who followed him, for they did not make of civil disobedience a pattern of their life, nor of other Gandhian features such as simplicity and economy.

We should first of all work out the implications of constitutional patriots like Mr. Jinnah staying on in the freedom fight. I shall not rest on the somewhat slender argument that the architect of partition would then have striven constitutionally in unity. My argument goes deeper. The situation would have been such that there would have been no urge for another man of Mr. Jinnah's ability and will to raise the banner of partition. Again, the atmosphere of Hindu religiosity, which came inevitably though unhappily with non-violence, would probably not have been there in quite the same measure. British behaviour might also have been different. Instead of

encouraging a split between Hindus and Muslims, then Hindu-Muslim rioting, and ultimately partition, British imperialism in India would probably have followed another line of action. It would have used its energies for furtherance of splits between the more moderate of constitutionalists and their less pleasant variety.

If partition had not come with all its cruelty and murder and a general condition in which virtue and vice lose their separate meanings, India might have been in a better way. It strikes me at this stage that I have almost proved Gandhiji to be a curse rather than a blessing to the country. I have no intention to run away from the implications of my argument. There is indeed a possibility that India without Gandhiji would have been more happily placed, at least in the short run. Gandhiji's mode of action has no validity or value, if it does not spread over the whole world. It has value only if the future so unfolds itself that the temporary loss of India can be proved to have been the world's gain. If non-violence should ever become the framework of man's collective life through the mode of civil disobedience, India's misfortunes in her freedom fight will have justified themselves. India was, in a manner of speaking, a guineapig for the benefit of the world. Those who talk of non-violence from the viewpoint of benefits the nation received from it are men of pitiful ignorance.

India has, perhaps unknowingly, suffered for the sake of the world. The chief author of this suffering may not himself have been aware that he was making a sacrifice of India for the future of the world. His successors certainly are not. In trying to argue away civil disobedience as a mode of the native against the foreigner, and to reject it as the eternal rhythm of the oppressed against the oppressor, whether under native or foreign rule, under a democracy or a dictatorship, these men are making fun of their country and their master. One is led to suspect that there is something basically lacking or evil in a leadership of non-violence, at least in the early stages, which mocks at its own effort and spoils its own successes.

I do not think that any other revolution in history has gone back upon its objectives as totally as the Indian revolution.

That applies not alone to the mode of civil disobedience, but more so to the other political, social and economic objectives. Did Gandhiji stretch the bow more than he should have ? Did he smelt the ore more than it could bear ? Two images come to the mind : of Gandhiji having been an unskilled craftsman, and of his not knowing or not paying heed to the capacity of his followers. He did not sufficiently take into account the principle of boomerang or recoil or refinement to the point of enervation. But then the question arises as to whether Gandhiji should have given up his mode of non-violence in view of the bad ore of which his immediate lieutenants and the Congress leadership were made. That was just not possible.

Gandhiji was either a fake or a prophet and, if the latter, he had come into the world to change it as only a man does in several centuries. He did not have much freedom of choice or manoeuvre. He might indeed have built a few leaders out of such sections as were not too eager for the good life or had not been corrupted by too long a tradition of adjustments. He might also have been a little more straightforward, a little less artful, about his steps and a little more outspoken about his defeats, as well as his victories, so that he need not have obscured every political expediency under the garb of non-violent idealism. These are, however, all matters of detail. Again, they are only hypotheses. They do not in any case deny the fundamental dilemma of non-violence, of its having to operate for the noblest objectives of man in a milieu where centuries of degradation have made him inferior.

Non-violence is without doubt a weapon of the bravest of the brave. But they have no use for it. They have their guns and their nuclear bombs. It is, therefore, left to be tried out by a comparatively weaker and inferior set of people. Perhaps, in the very process of using the weapon over and over again, these men will acquire virtue and become superior.

History is traditionally read in a very bad way, not as a process which it is, but as the result of a phase. Except for periods of definite decay, it is almost always a process. Some fools may think that I have been making adverse judgments on non-violence, Gandhiji and his leadership. I am too firm a believer

in the Gandhian process to do so. I am only stating certain established facts of the Gandhian process, both pleasant and unpleasant, and it is immaterial to me to know for certain which of them could have been different. While I have been trained as a scientist to be both truthful and comprehensive, I pray devoutly as a revolutionary that the Gandhian process has not yet ended and that it is still on. True science of society is not possible without revolutionism. If, therefore, I point out where we have come, it is not with a view to making a complaint or to deny the roade but in order to discover whether we can walk with greater awareness of what we are after.

The Indian revolution has been almost totally reversed. Its promise of an awakened life for the hundreds of millions of our people has been betrayed. It is treating them as objects rather than as subjects; there is virtually no willed participation of the people in governmental activities of the successful revolution. All that revolution's government has done in the past thirteen years is paid activity. Almost every revolution treats the people more like objects than like subjects after it has succeeded, but that is only a comparative difference in degree. In India that difference appears to be absolute. While the revolution was on, the people were at least partly subjects; now that it has succeeded they are almost wholly objects. This total reversal of the mind finds its expression in different spheres of life in a number of concrete ways. The revolution has reversed its attitudes on simplicity, the fashionable life, requirements of dignity and representation, language, liberality and social mobility, equality, elementary requirements of the people, status of the bureaucrat, functions of the classes that are hereditarily servile to every occupant of the Delhi throne, styles of dress and other modes of living, internal use of the gun, external reliance on the army and more so on intrigue, Indians overseas and other afflicted parts of humanity, physical or spiritual integration like those of Goa or Pondicherry and Sikkim, the spirit and rules of democracy in the functioning and management of institutions, corruption for personal gain or comfort as well as for purchase of souls, Kautilyaism in government and a hundred other things big and small. I can

think of only three directions in which the revolution has not yet been totally reversed : industrialisation, adult vote and comparative freedom of speech. Even in these directions partial reversals are already showing themselves. Adult vote, for instance, has been under the concerted offensive of those who call themselves the spiritual and political heirs of Mahatma Gandhi and, in some areas, it is actually on the retreat. Industrialisation is showing itself as sectional modernisation and some industries of the large scale. In actual effect it is vastly imitative, and so little ingenious or exploratory that it has not touched the major sector of economy.

I have written at some length on Gandhiji's leadership in respect of the country's partition and reversal of the revolution. From the viewpoint of enduring effects on the nation and of the world as a whole, no other leadership is worthy of elaborate examination. From the narrower viewpoint of what has happened currently to the country and of the generation of men to which I belong, two other men have partially played the shaper's role. I have tried to examine the leadership of one of them in respect of certain specific actions. These three men, Mahatma Gandhi, Mr. Nehru and Netaji Bose, appear in company, more often than not, on the walls of households and shops all over the country, which shows that my opinion of their influence is definitely not a private opinion. How far these householders and shopkeepers idolise this trinity with understanding is very much open to doubt. I have recently seen a seated Gandhiji and a Subhas Bose with a drawn sword, both in cement, on the main crossing of an Andhra town. There is perhaps some mystical understanding, which the common man possesses in greater measure than the logical and thinking man, that helps him to reconcile the irreconcilables. In fact there was the great bond of freedom's desire which united the three. Nevertheless, might not there be a hint of the Indian genius for adjustment and wishing away all dissimilarities, and for the philosophy of minimum exertion and maximum prayer in the joint idolisation of the three ?

While the desire for freedom united the three, there were such gross disharmonies among them that they have damaged the current texture of our national life, although these may well

have been a reflection of some disjointed and stubborn elements in the very long Indian past. The Indian people would do well to seek to harmonise, through understading rather than through sentiment, their recent past, and they may try to understand and forgive, but never to forget or obscure unpleasant facts of their experience and history. To men of my generation, Gandhiji was the dream, Jawaharlalji the desire, and Netaji Subhas the deed. The dream shall ever beckon and, although it had its blemishes in detail, its glory shall, I hope, brighten with time. The desire has soured and the deed was not completed. The fact that the dream, the desire and the deed could not travel in harmony, not only among themselves but more so in respect of the effects that they produced on their people, shall be a source of pain to us who have lived under their influence and of sadness to the historian.

I sometimes wonder whether my estimate of Mr. Nehru's great fall is objective. There is not the slightest doubt that one adventitious factor influences me in my writings and, more so, my speeches. Everybody who matters in the country has ended up by idolising Mr. Nehru; all opinions that are talked about or accepted flow out of him and most of these are vulgarly meaningless. In such a situation, it becomes impossible not to catch hold of the chief, in fact, the only culprit. When people have asked me why I seemed to have some kind of an obsession regarding Mr. Nehru, I have told them that the obsession is not mine but that of such vocal classes as mould opinions. I am sometimes angry with myself for giving such importance to a man who is after all more contemporary than enduring. But how can one who is engaged in politics act otherwise, when the country's politics knows only one man and three different varieties of mice : those who lick, those who bite and lick alternately, and those who bite. Mice that bite are very rare, though perhaps some day they may grow into the stature of men. When organised politics and opinion in the country stop their selfish adulation of Mr. Nehru, I shall also stop my obsession about him, which is obviously more political than emotional. The question still remains whether I may not be wrong, at least partially, in my estimate of Mr. Nehru's fall and,

also an additional question whether Mr. Nehru was ever so great as to have been worthy of becoming the desire of countless men and women of my generation.

Mr. Nehru has been enormously sensitive towards life in manner as well as feeling, though I do not know today whether it was not more manner than feeling. But sensitivity is always a *mark of refinement, even when it is confined to manner. I remem*ber one occasion when Mr. Nehru was lying ill and his daughter was to fly back home after a long stay abroad. He seemed very worried that he could not be at the airport to receive her. I laughed and told him that so many others would be there including her aunt. He tried to imagine his daughter's sentiments when her roving eyes failed to see his face. A sort of obtuseness had come over me, and I insisted that they would tell her straightway of his minor indisposition. He told me of the minute or two that would pass between the inability of the questioning eyes to sight the father, their most cherished treasure, and the receipt of information as to why he was not there and the world of anxiety and speculation that would be packed in those two minutes. Such mature love, aware of itself, is perhaps not possible in early youth, although, when one fully understands the story, it is enough to make one like both the daughter and the father.

I believe the greatest source of Mr. Nehru's spell over me and my country was his great sensitivity, or his convincing affectation of it. Was he ever really as sensitive, even in those impassioned days of freedom's fight, as he appeared to be? Have increasing age and the comfort or power that go with office caused a decline of his sensitivity? It is possible that his sensitivity was always at least partly a manner and a refinement cultivated through strenuous endeavour, but it is certain that, whatever it was, there has been a decline in later years. Who knows if, after all, the man is not really to blame, and that in his blood courses the art of adjustment, acceptance without acquiescence and surrender without cowardice, the capacity for limited sacrifice and the desire for unlimited recognition and the superb intelligence of statecraft and groupcraft, of which India's ruling castes of 4,000 years or more are the world's unmatched example.

Before I give an instance of this superb craft, I should like to tell of my surmise that, if Netaji Subhas were ever to have returned home after his great and peerless adventure for freedom, he would have given six months of acute trouble to Mr. Nehru but no more. If Mr. Nehru had been able physically to survive the return of Subhas Bose, he would have been on top again after six months, so that Subhas Bose would either have gone in opposition or become his second-in-command.

Subhas Bose did not possess Mr. Nehru's cunning and refinement. He might, indeed, have tried to be clever on certain occasions, and I believe he did, but he did not possess the sure touch of a master at such jobs, and he made some big mistakes. Whenever I remember my last exchanges with him, I feel a little unhappy at my own wit and sad that Subhas Bose did not find some way to adjust, in whatever loose manner, with Gandhiji. I had succeeded in getting the All-India Congress Committee pass an amendment, with Mr. Nehru's support, to a South Africa resolution drafted by Gandhiji. Some hours later, Gandhiji sent word to the committee asking it not to have a resolution at all on that subject, or to pass it basically as he had drafted it. This was some kind of a king's veto. The committee did what Gandhiji wished it to do and adjourned till the next day. As we were leaving the hall, Subhas Bose happened to come near me and asked if I had, at least then, understood that the Congress was without power, to which I returned the pert reply that we all understood what the real situation was, but that some did not act accordingly, while I did.

I am not too sure today that Gandhiji was not to blame in the Subhas affair. In fact, I have noticed a curious fact about Gandhiji's choice: he was, more often than not, on the less radical side in the internal disputes in the Congress Party such as those between Mr. Nehru or Mr. J. M. Sen Gupta or Dr. Pattabhi and Mr. Bose, Mr. Rajagopalachari and Mr. Satyamurti, Dr. Satyapal and Dr. Bhargav and the like. This may have been occasioned by the fact that the more radical person or wing in the Congress was the less pliable in respect of non-violence and other Gandhian beliefs. But it is also possible that some inadequacies of temperament

or accidental details of a situation made Gandhiji act the way he did. This like many other subjects of Gandhiji's philosophy and work, is worthy of intensive exploration.

I do not know whether with my present comprehension, I w uld act any differently from the way I did, for a better understanding is of little use when the choice is very narrow. I was then neutral, because I preferred Gandhiji to Subhas Bose, but did not like Gandhiji's men. I would also like to put on record that, whatever may have been my criticisms of Gandhiji's individual ideas and acts, my concepts of what ought to be and what is met in him. The ideal was physically embodied in the real. This state of mind belongs to all religions and to all political philosophies that leave nothing out and also to the passion of real liking. I have often wished to give to Subhas Bose after his death what I withheld from him in his life. Subhas Bose was the embodiment of the Haldighati spirit. What we need most in our national life today is precisely this spirit. His aim was clear, he accepted neither defeat nor the withdrawal of lassitude, and he tried to act in all situations. But one wishes that the Haldighati spirit were somewhat cleverer than it often is.

The superb craft that Mr. Nehru possesses expressed itself in the controversy around the ultimate responsibility for Gandhiji's murder. A few days after the murder, Kamala Devi and Mr. Jaya Prakash Narayan came to me and wanted me to put my signature on a joint statement which, among other suggestions, accused Sardar Patel of neglect of the Home Minister's duty, also because he had taken over too many portfolios. I objected to this part of the statement and wanted to have it generalised into an accusation against all such ministers, including the Prime Minister, who had taken over more than one portfolio. We argued a little, with some heat, but the two of them had to go away without my signature. They returned the next day with the change that I had desired. I do not know whether they had any direct contact with Mr. Nehru at that time or through intermediaries like the Raos whether Kitty or Shivarao or somebody similar; I would also not be too sure whether, with his refinement and cunning, Mr. Nehru took any direct part in this affair.

At the press conference, where the joint statement was released, the generalised accusation against ministers holding more than one portfolio was pinpointed by Mr. Narayan to refer to the Home Minister. Something must have been known about what was going on within our circle. Mr. Rangaswamy, of a somewhat widely circulated English-language journal, asked me at one stage of the press conference whether I was in agreement with what Mr. Narayan had said. I had until then not learnt how to combine democracy with intelligence, loyalty to comrades with unrepressed expression of beliefs and opinions, so I let this somewhat important occasion slip through my fingers.

The publicity that attended our suggestions, including the accusation, was enormous. It was of very great help to Mr. Nehru for, in tarring Sardar Patel with an almost irremovable blot, it helped the former go up in the people's estimation. I cannot say whether there was any bargain or, if there was one, where the thing went wrong. In any event, Mr. Nehru came to Mr. Narayan's rescue when the latter fell into such deep waters as were beyond his skill or strength as a result of the howl that the Patel forces put up. Mr. Nehru shielded his protégé and, in this case a very able agent, with an exceedingly generous and very public tribute.

While I am on the subject of manipulation and intrigue in the game of politics, I must also point out the havoc these have created in the country's socialist movement. Manipulation may be all right, at least in the selfish way, for men of great skill, who are also backed by some decisive strength. It becomes a curse in persons with lesser craftiness and little backing. The socialist movement started trying out the tricks of manipulation before it had adequately changed the base of the people's mind, and its leaders had become sufficiently skilled and experienced. Even that section of the movement, which is avowedly and entirely free from the tricks of manipulation, has not yet been able fully to reform its mind.

I was talking the other day about the prospects of the Socialist Party, which at the moment happen to be rather dim, with a colleague of very long experience. He was not at all so

cheerless. I was amazed. He argued. He thought that, in the near future, the government would have to come to terms with the Socialist Party. That is precisely the point. He did not think of the increasing membership of his own organisation. He did not think directly of the change in the thinking and activities of his people. He did not think of the expanding organisations and committees of his party. He did not think of the increased participation of the people in his party's agitations or civil disobedience. He had probably all this vaguely in mind, but he did not think it out to its end. Some weakness of will made him think of the man in office and his altering attitudes and manipulations and not of the changing opinions and organisation of his people as the ultimate source of power. It is this weakness of will that is at the root of the country's partition, as of the failure hitherto of the socialist movement.

The Haldighati spirit takes a long view and does not mind a succession of defeats. It does not believe that the world will end with the current generation. It believes that the ultimate source of strength and goodness lies in the power of the will. How clean, knowing, unselfish and undefeated is this spirit. The Indian people have only rarely known the Haldighati spirit, at least in their politics. They have known too much of the Panipat, Kanva, and the Buxar spirit. This latter spirit measures and calculates and does not generally give battle to the foe. Even when it does, it continues to measure and to calculate, and is ready early to accept defeat and to surrender, or at least to run away without the intention to fight again. It does not regroup after a defeat. I would refer such as have not understood the Haldighati spirit to the Thermopylae spirit, for both are alike, except in location and personnel. For one Haldighati there are at least a hundred Panipats, Kanvas and Buxars in Indian history. India shall truly change when her youth vows to cast out of the mind all the Panipat, Kanva and Buxar manipulations.

To stop the reversal of the revolution, as also to undo partition and, in fact, to do good to what is now India and Pakistan, the first essential is the emergence of the Haldighati spirit among

the people. What would this spirit mean concretely in relation to the Indo-Pakistan problem ? It would, under no circumstances, mean warlike postures or attitudes. Those in India who sometimes threaten—more in private conversation than in public speeches—to destroy Pakistan by the force of arms are either lunatics or cheats, probably the latter. Such a thing is impossible in the present international context. Probably because of this, the anti-Pakistan spirit has generally deteriorated into an anti-Muslim spirit. As it is impossible to strike at Pakistan, the mad men or the scoundrels decide to strike at Muslims whenever they get an opportunity. Such activities reinforce the partition of the country. Partition can be undone only with increasing identification between Hindus and Muslims, the absence of which was the prime cause of partition. The Haldighati spirit will therefore set to itself the clear aim of Hindu-Muslim identification and seek to achieve it tenaciously. A Hindu who is an enemy of partition must necessarily be a friend of Muslims.

The ultimate identification in the social sphere relates to marriage. I am sure that, unless more than one in a hundred of all weddings taking place in the country are between Hindu and Muslim, the problem will not have been solved in an ultimate manner. That is even truer of the internal castes of the Hindu system. Nevertheless, there are a hundred other items of identification, such as name, dress, joint participation in festivals, external appearance, eating together, and, above all, joint membership, beliefs and action in common organisations. An increasing approximation of the standards of living of India's citizens is the ultimate characteristic of identification in the economic sphere. I will not here refer to the necessary changes that will have to come over certain religious and theological beliefs, except to mention that the destruction of caste within Hinduism is a condition precedent for all else. I end by enumerating the other tactical solutions, such as confederal schemes between the governments of India and Pakistan, people-to-people relationships and special schemes for the situations of Phaktoonistan, Bengal and the like.

INDEX